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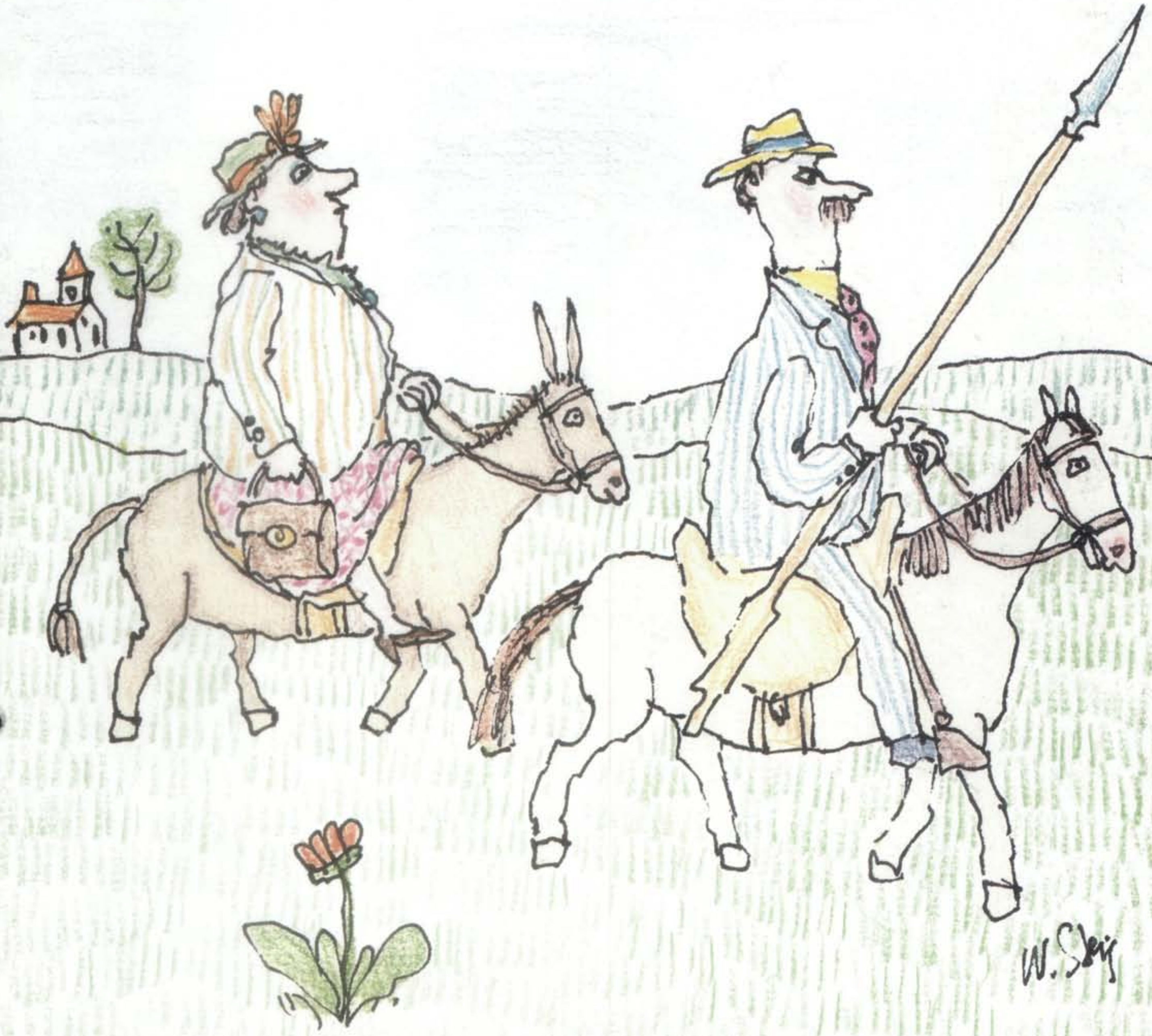

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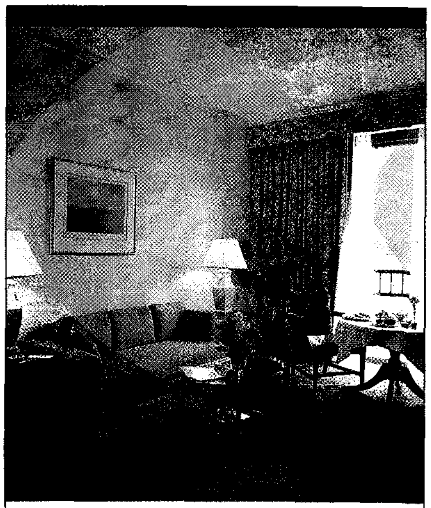

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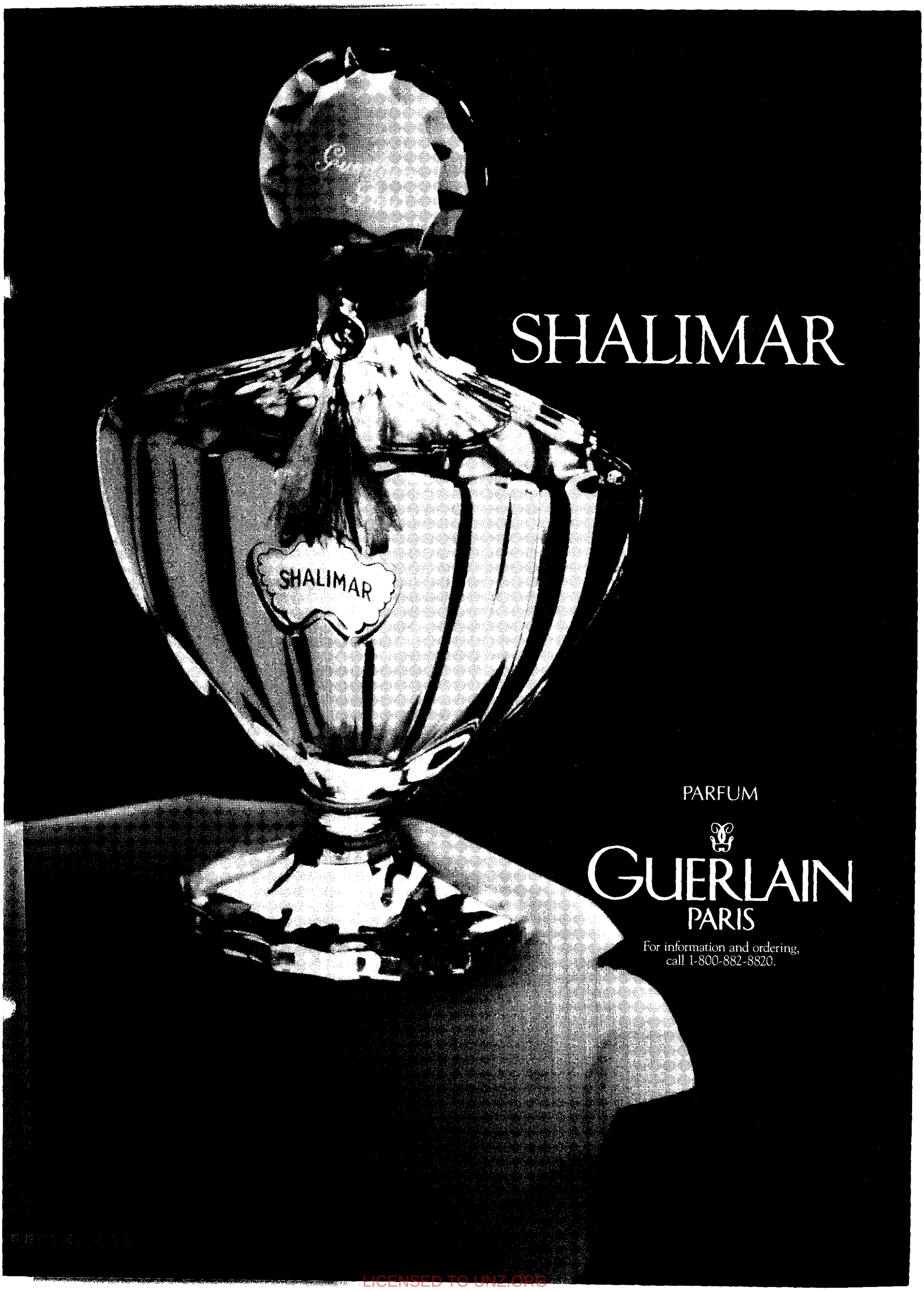
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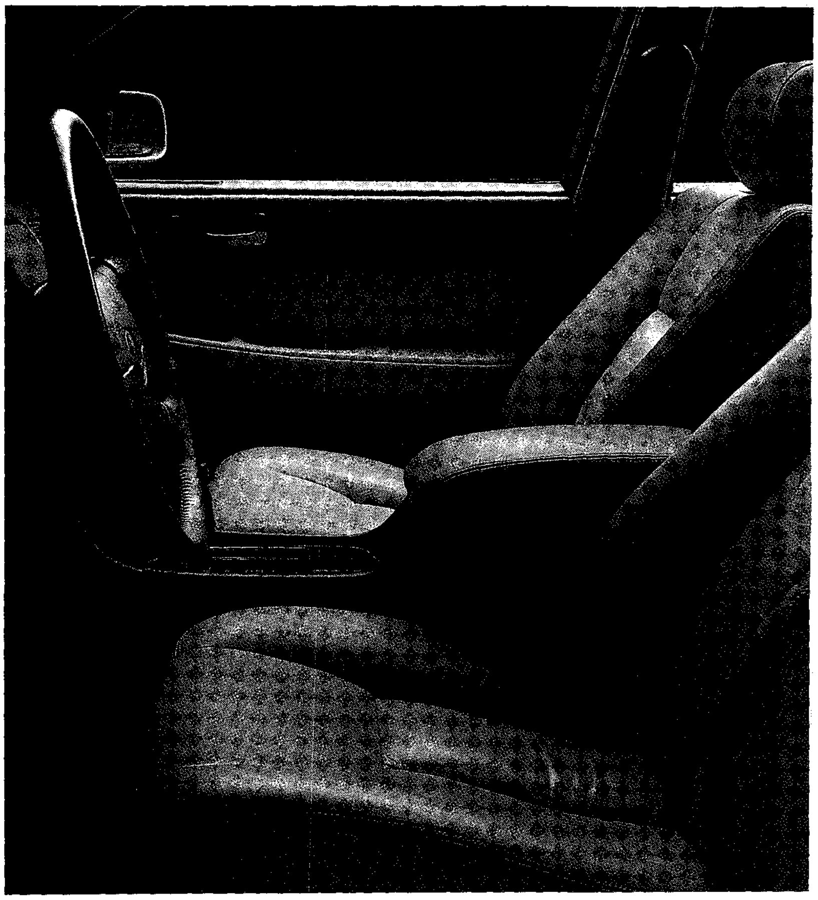

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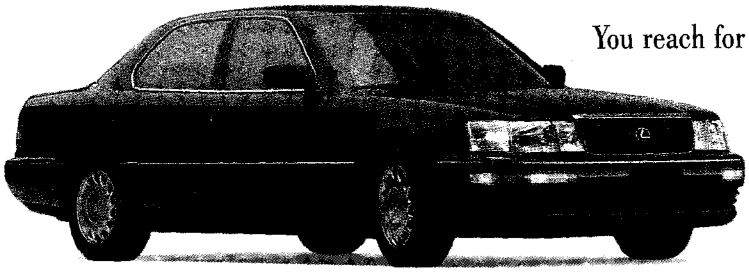

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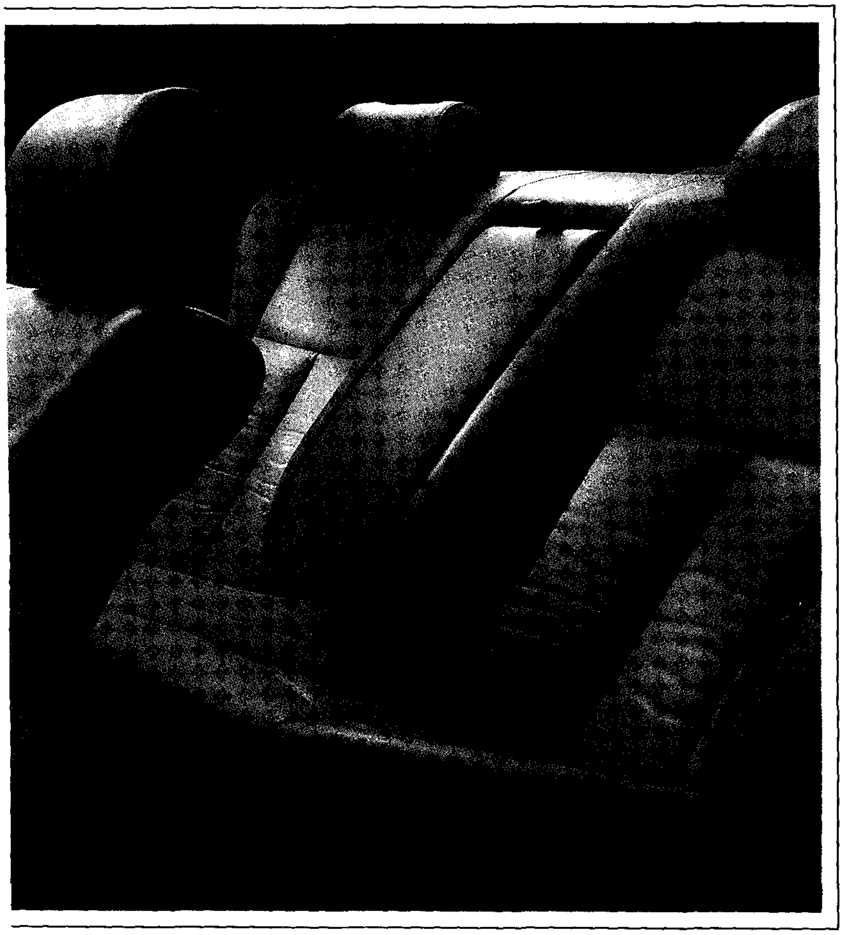

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

ALTHOUGH Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Carousel," which opened on April 19, 1945, was the fifth-longest-running musical in a decade filled with durable shows, some theatre historians consider its success somewhat mixed. As evidence they point to the fact that "Carousel" closed a year before the same duo's "Oklahoma!," which had opened two years earlier, and suggest that this was, in part, because of "Carousel" 's darker mood. It may not have been well advised, at the moment when the war was winding down and liberation was in the air, to have opened a show in which the main character, Billy Bigelow, commits suicide. A run of eight hundred and ninety performances, however, hardly strikes us as a failure. It was certainly a fate much happier than that encountered initially by "Liliom," the Ferenc Molnár work on which "Carousel" is based. That play closed soon after bowing in December, 1909, in Budapest. Only when it was revived in the same city a decade later, and exported to New York two years after that, did it secure a foothold.

Calling "Carousel" 's original fortunes "mixed" may be debatable; calling the show's current status "lukewarm" is surer. The generation now becoming parents did not grow up with it as intensely as they did with "South Pacific" or "The King and I" or "The Sound of Music." Will their children suffer the same fate? That would be a shame; the score of "Carousel" is generally considered one of Richard Rodgers' best, including such songs as "If I Loved You," "June Is Bustin' Out All Over," and "You'll Never Walk Alone." But the music also requires near-operatic singers and a truly operatic-size orchestra to be successful. (Who wants to hear the opening "Carousel Waltz" played by an understaffed string section?) The Village Light Opera Group, which will present the musical starting April 27 at the Haft Auditorium of the Fashion Institute of Technology, promises a cast of sixty performers and "full orchestral accompaniment." Their production is the first major New York revival of "Carousel" in fifteen years. It's been too long a wait, though the wait for full-scale local revivals of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Pipe Dream" and "Flower Drum Song" has been even longer.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Circle Repertory Company—Presenting WALKING THE DEAD, a new play by Keith Curran. Scotty Bloch, Ashley Gardner, Joe Mantello, Christopher Shaw, Cotter Smith, Myra Taylor, and Tyrone Wilson make up the cast. Previews begin April 24. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

Gypsy—The Tyne Daly-led revival of the Laurents-Styne-Sondheim musical returns to Broadway. Everything's coming up you-know-what. Previews through April 27. Reopens April 28 at 3. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

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Sam Tsoutsouvas, Peter Frechette, and Tracey Ellis in "Our Country's Good"

Modigliani—A revival of Dennis McIntyre's 1979 play, with Ronald Guttman as the artist. Previews April 23-24. Opens April 25 at 8. (Jewish Repertory Theatre, 344 E. 14th St. 505-2667.)

The Old Boy—A new play by A. R. Gurney, with Stephen Collins. Directed by John Rubinstein. In previews. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Our Country's Good—A play by Timberlake Wertenbaker, set in eighteenth-century Australia. Produced here under the auspices of the Broadway Alliance, the show has also been done in London and Hartford. Directed by Mark Lamos. Previews through April 28. Opens April 29 at 6:30. (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 246-0102.)

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui—John Turturro and David Patrick Kelly in a production of Brecht's 1951 play. In previews. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

The Secret Garden—Mandy Patinkin and Daisy Eagan lead the cast of a new musical based on the Frances Hodgson Burnett classic. Marsha Norman wrote the book and the lyrics, and Lucy Simon provided the score. Susan H. Schulman directed. Previews April 23-24. Opens April 25 at 6:30. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

The Stick Wife—A play by Darrah Cloud, set in the sixties, about the wives of three Birmingham Klansmen. With Michael Countryman, Lindsay Crouse, Lanny Flaherty, Murphy Guyer, Margo Martindale, and Julie White. Directed by David Warren. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Village Light Opera Group—Presenting a brief engagement of Rodgers and Hammerstein's CAROUSEL. Opens April 27 at 8, and runs through May 5. (Fashion Institute of Technology, 227 W. 27th St. 279-4200.)

The Will Rogers Follies—A new musical starring Keith Carradine. The book is by Peter Stone, the score by Cy Coleman, and the lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Directed and choreographed by Tommy Tune. Previews through April 30. Opens May 1 at 6:15. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

NEW THIS SEASON

Advice from a Caterpillar—The brat-pack actress Ally Sheedy is perfectly awful in this rather effortful comedy by Douglas Carter Beane. Mr. Beane is the stage doorman uptown at the Neil Simon Theatre (in case you want to stick your head in). Despite some nifty work by Harley Venton, Dennis Christopher, and David Lansbury—and solid direction from David's father, Edgar—the evening is not a great success. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/15/91.) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

And the World Goes 'Round: The Songs of Kander & Ebb—A musical revue, with Bob Cuccioli, Karen Mason, Brenda Pressley, Jim Walton, and Karen Ziëmba. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 246-0102.)

Black Eagles—A play by Leslie Lee, about the Tuskegee Airmen, the black fighter pilots of the Second World War. Directed by Ricardo Khan. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story—Anyone who thinks that rock and roll lives on had better steer clear of this ersatz docu-musical about the life of Buddy Holly. (11/19/90) (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Carreño—A show based on the life of Teresa Carreño, the Venezuelan composer, pianist, conductor, and singer. Written and performed by Pamela Ross and directed by Gene Frankel. Most performances are in English; a few are in Spanish. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Daugherty & Field Off-Broadway—The cabaret team of Bill Daugherty and Robin Field in a revue of swing and show tunes. (Double Image, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)

Fiddler on the Roof—The Israeli actor Topol makes a commanding Tevye—the best of all of them—in this production, which falls somewhere between revival and facsimile. The songs are by Bock and Harnick; the dances and staging are re-created from the Jerome Robbins originals; and the costumes are from the Patricia Zipprodt originals. (12/3/90) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510.)

The Good Times Are Killing Me—A play by Lynda Barry. Angela Goethals and Chandra Wilson head a fourteen-member cast; Mark Brokaw directed. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Grand Finale—The Ubu Repertory Theatre presents a 1987 farce by Copi (a.k.a. Raul Damonte). Translated from the French by Michael Feingold and directed by André Ernotte. (15 W. 28th St. 679-7562.)

The Haunted Host—Harvey Fierstein and Jason Workman star in a revival of Robert Patrick's 1964 comedy. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

I Hate Hamlet—In Paul Rudnick's jokey farce, Nicol Williamson gives a stunning comedy performance as the ghost of John Barrymore, summoned to aid a young Hollywood actor who has been booked to play Hamlet in the Park. Mr. Williamson is ably supported by some of the other actors, but the show boils down to a marvellous solo turn. (4/22/91) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

Ivy Rowe—Barbara Bates Smith in a one-woman show adapted from Lee Smith's novel "Fair and Tender Ladies." (Provincetown, 133 Macdougal St. 477-5048.)

Jackie Mason: Brand New—The comedian brings his one-man show to Broadway again. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting three plays in rotating repertory: Shakespeare's JULIUS CAESAR and a double bill of Georg Büchner's WOYZECK and LEONCE AND LENA. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

The Kingfish—A play about Huey Long, by Larry L. King and Ben Z. Grant. With John McConnell in the title role. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Lost in Yonkers—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in New York during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of

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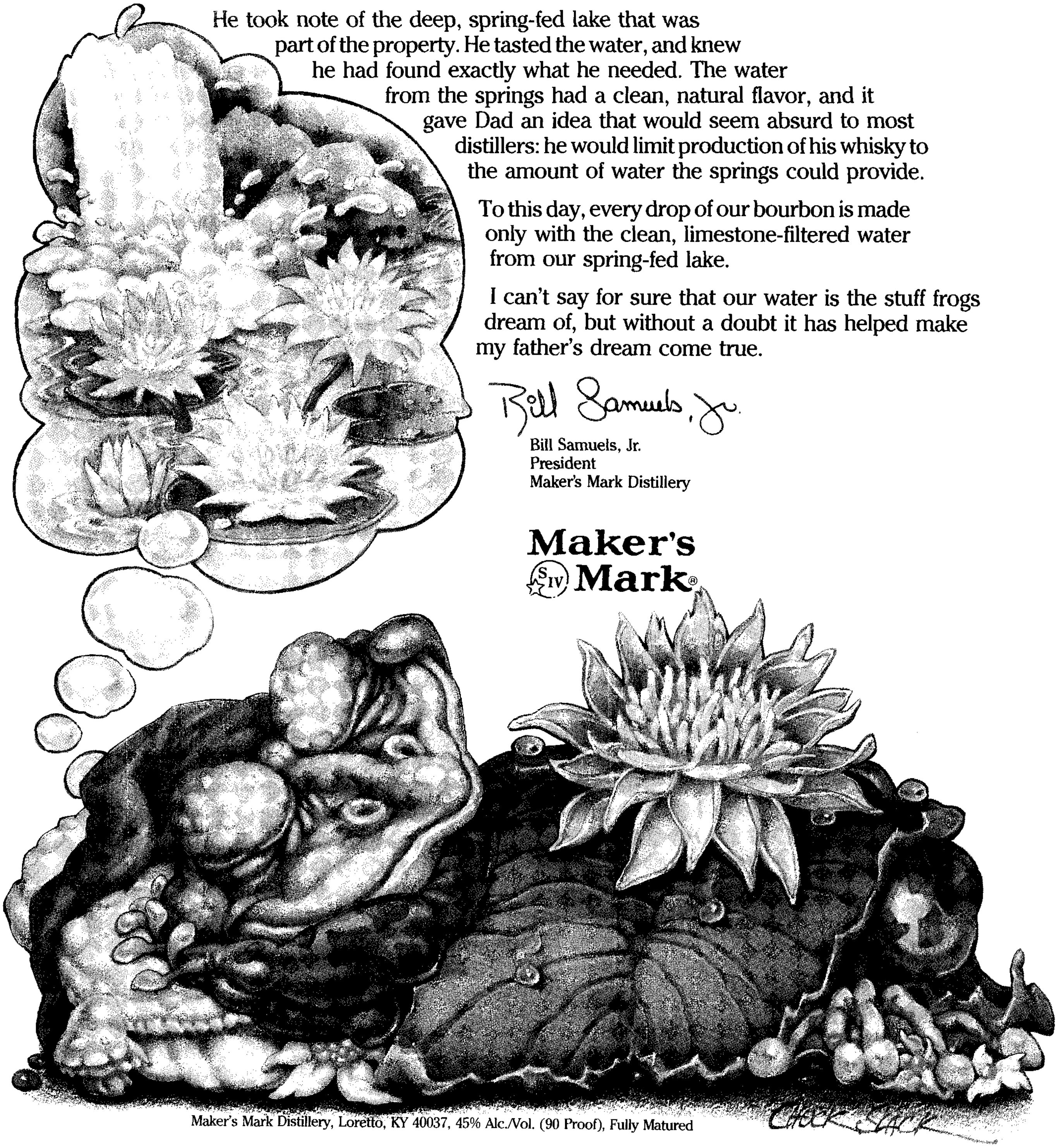

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a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Lucifer's Child—Julie Harris, actress and impersonator, is impeccable as ever in this one-woman show about Baroness Blixen, who used the pen name Isak Dinesen. The baroness, sad to say, is not very dramatic. (4/15/91) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes April 27.)

Making History—This revival of a weirdly inept Brian Friel play (you might think it's written by another Brian Friel) is not up to the Irish Repertory Theatre's usual high standards. (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes April 28.)

Mambo Mouth—John Leguizamo's show, in which he portrays seven Hispanic characters. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

Miss Saigon—Jonathan Pryce, Lea Salonga, Hinton Battle, Barry K. Bernal, Liz Callaway, and Willy Falk in the musical by Claude-Michel Schönberg, Alain Boublil, and Richard Maltby, Jr. (Kam Cheng plays Miss Salonga's role in certain performances.) Directed by Nicholas Hytner. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

New York Theatre Workshop—Presenting three one-person shows in rotating repertory: **JEFFREY ESSMANN'S ARTIFICIAL REALITY** and a double bill of Dario Fo plays, **EVE'S DIARY** (with Jane Kaczmarek) and **THE STORY OF THE TIGER** (with Rocco Sisto). (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 279-4200. The Fo pieces close April 25, and "Artificial Reality" closes May 11.)

Once on This Island—A musical by Lynn Ahrens (book and lyrics) and Stephen Flaherty (score), which is based on Rosa Guy's 1985 novel, "My Love, My Love." (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Penn & Teller—The heavenly twain meet again. The new tricks are just as mysterious (and frightening) as the old ones. As for the tricksters, their bogus candor is intact, and they've never been funnier. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.)

Pygmalion—Charles Keating steals the show (as usual), playing Alfred Doolittle, dynamic dustman. The production is a decent one (but no more than that), with Anthony Heald as Professor Higgins, Madeleine Potter as Eliza, Earle Hyman as Pickering, and Anne Pitoniak as Mrs. Higgins. (4/8/91) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Closes April 28.)

Red Scare on Sunset—Charles Busch wrote and stars in this comedy about an actress battling Communism in nineteen-fifties Hollywood. Directed by Kenneth Elliott. The cast also includes Ralph Buckley, Roy Cockrum, Andy Halliday, Julie Halston, Mark Hamilton, Judith Hansen, and Arnie Kolodner. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

Remembrance—A play by Graham Reid, with Aideen O'Kelly and Henry J. Quinn. Directed by Terence Lamude. (Irish Arts Theatre, 553 W. 51st St. 307-7171.)

A Room of One's Own—Eileen Atkins is sublime in this stage adaptation of the Virginia Woolf essay. Easily the most civilized entertainment on offer, this one-woman show is something every lively-minded young woman above the age of fifteen—fourteen if she's particularly lively-minded—will want to see. (3/18/91) (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

The Substance of Fire—Ron Rifkin gives an impeccable performance as a publisher—a refugee from Nazi Germany—whose difficulties with his grown children are no greater than those with himself. The play, by Jon Robin Baitz, is not flawless, but it is consistently absorbing and very well acted, under the direction of Daniel Sullivan. With Sarah Jessica Parker, Patrick Breen, Jon Tenney, and Maria Tucci. (4/1/91) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

The Sum of Us—David Stevens' poignant comedy about how hard it is for parents and children to break free of each other (particularly if they get on too well) is set in present-day Australia. Depending on how you look at it, the play is either very dear and rather flawed or rather dear and very flawed. (11/5/90) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

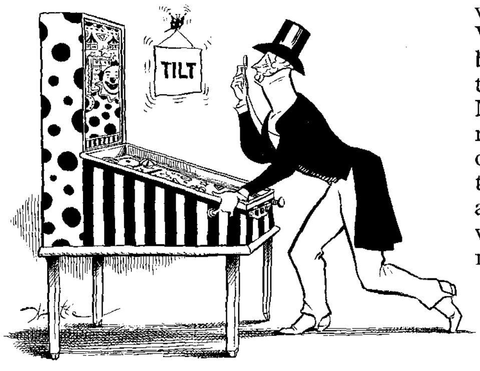
Taking Steps—This very funny farce by the inspired English playwright Alan Ayckbourn is a technical as well as a dramatic triumph. The action, which takes place in a three-story suburban house, is played on a one-level set; the actors mime climbing up and down steps indicated on a path surrounding the set. The plot deals with a marriage that is coming apart, to the surprise and shock of the husband. The performances, unfortunately, do not match the precision of the play (except for those of Christopher Benjamin, as the husband, and Spike McClure, as a young solicitor). But no ineptitude can dim the brilliance of this comedy. (3/4/91) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Closes April 28.)

Three Sisters—Melissa Bruder, Mary McCann, and Elizabeth McGovern star in David Mamet's adaptation of the Chekhov play. Directed by W. H. Macy. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-8755.)

York Theatre Company—Presenting a revival of **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM.** Jack Cirillo heads a cast of sixteen. (2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Closes April 28.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turns thirty-one in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.) . . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **PRELUDE TO A KISS:** Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. With Ashley Crow and John Randolph. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.) . . . **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright, director Jerry Zaks, and actress Stockard Channing. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. Also with Courtney B. Vance and John Cunningham. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **SMOKE ON THE MOUNTAIN:** This loving satire of old-time gospel music, set in 1938, is perfectly delightful. Written by Connie Ray, it re-creates a Saturday-night service at a small church in rural North Carolina, where a family of gospel singers have been invited to appear. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)



DANCE

MARTHA GRAHAM, who died recently at the age of ninety-six, enjoyed one of the longest, most fruitful, and, in many ways, most triumphant lives of anyone we have ever seen. We are always fascinated to hear how people feel about her. Recently, Paul Taylor shared with us his reflections on Miss Graham's demise. Before becoming a choreographer, Mr. Taylor was a leading dancer with Miss Graham's company, and the originator of such Graham characters as Aegisthus in "Clytemnestra."

"Someone who was at her bedside called me right afterward," Mr. Taylor said. "Without thinking, I responded, 'Finally!' I'd prepared myself, you see—had thought about it and realized that she wouldn't have wanted to go on in the tumbledown state she was in. Yet it's a shame that she couldn't have made her last exit while taking a bow. The theatrics would have appealed to her. But at least she didn't suffer, didn't even breathe hard, just went to sleep."

He continued, "About a week later I woke up feeling lousy. A bothersome lump had got stuck in my throat. I thought maybe a cold was coming on, or some strange type of knobby depression. Then something reminded me of Martha's passing and I realized I was having a delayed reaction. I went out and found an old beat-up Victorian frame at a junk store, came back home, tore out my favorite picture of Martha from the Barbara Morgan book, and, as if it were a reliquary, hung it in a place of honor. Although Martha's been a potent figure in my mind—almost like a mother, a moon mother—and always will be, it had never occurred to me to put up a picture of her, and I didn't need to now. It's just that she and her dusty frame—the small, round, lunar price tag still sticking to the glass—look cozily at home over my fireplace."

New York City Ballet—The season, which will run through June 30, opens with performances of Peter Martins' new production of "The Sleeping Beauty." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. April 24 at 8, benefit preview; April 25 at 8, première; April 26 at 8; April 27 at 2 and 8; April 28 at 1 and 7; and April 30-May 1 at 8.)

American Ballet Theatre—Opening performances of the season, which will run through June 22. April 22 at 8, a benefit performance; April 23 at 8; April 24 at 2 and 8; and April 25 at 8: A new production of "Coppélia." . . . ¶ April 26 at 8, April 27 at 2 and 8, and April 29 at 8: "Birthday Offering," "Jardin aux Lilas," and "Sinfonietta" (company pre-

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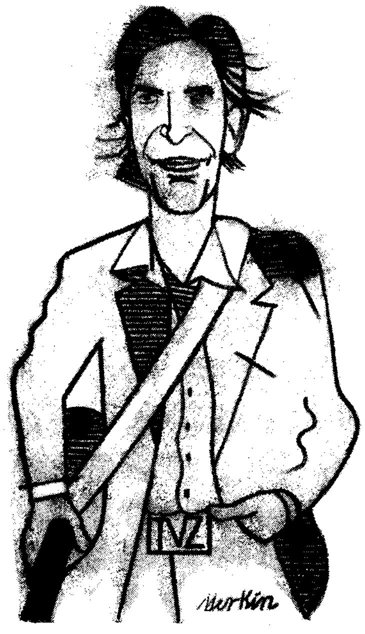
mière). . . . ¶ April 30 at 8 and May 1 at 2 and 8: "Don Quixote." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. For information about tickets to the benefit on April 22, call 477-3030.)

Limón Dance Company—April 23 at 8: "Cleave" (première), "Day on Earth," and "Retablos" (première). . . . ¶ April 24-25 and April 30 at 8: "Ritmo Jondo," "Hollow Lady" (première), "Volver," "Chaconne," and "There Is a Time." . . . ¶ April 26 at 8 and April 28 at 7:30: "Tanzlieder," "Day on Earth," and "Retablos." . . . ¶ April 27 and May 1 at 8, and April 28 at 2: "Air for the G String," "The Unsung," "Day on Earth," and "Cleave." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. *Through May 5.*)

"His and Hers"—A joint engagement by the dancers Irene Hultman and Vicky Shick and the performance artists Kurt Fulton and Chazz Dean. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. April 29-30 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

Rubén Blades, the Panamanian salsa star, is the closest thing around to a Renaissance man: not only has he had a prolific twenty-odd-year career as a singer and songwriter but he is also a successful film actor, a lawyer who studied both in Panama and at Harvard, and now a political aspirant. At a press conference at Sounds of Brazil the other night, nominally held to announce Blades' forthcoming first album for Sony Music International, the performer discussed his many careers and his plans for the future. "With this album, I am closing a cycle in my life," he told the roomful of journalists, newscasters, publicists, and record-company bigwigs who had assembled to pump the flesh and, while they were at it, sample the club's Caribbean appetizers and rum concoctions. A handsome, earnest-looking fellow in a crisp dark suit, Blades spoke in both Spanish and newscaster-perfect English, and the event felt more like a political briefing than a music-industry gathering. "My mom used to say you can't be at the Mass and the procession at the same time," Blades said. He went on to explain that once the record was released and a tour was completed he planned to run for an as yet unspecified political office in his native country. "I want to prepare the public for my return to Panama to fulfill my obligations in the political arena," he said.



Townes Van Zandt at the Bottom Line

The announcement didn't seem to surprise many in the room, and it shouldn't have: though Blades' concerts are often boisterous salsa romps, his music has always been charged with pointed political and social comment. In fact, his admirers credit him with elevating salsa from plebeian party music to a more enlightened art form. Blades left open the question of how much time he might find for music in the future, but it's doubtful that he will ever abandon it entirely. As he told the gathering at Sounds of Brazil, "Emotionally, nothing can beat the music."

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The Welsh singer **Iris Williams** can be found in the Oak Room Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. The show, Ms. Williams' Gotham dêbut, is devoted to the music of Jerome Kern. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—It's everything a cabaret should be: sleek, elegant, intimate, and slightly decadent. It also offers something that other cabarets do not: tapas, which come from the excellent Spanish restaurant adjoining the club. The sly British comedian **Julian Clary** is at work here for the next few weeks.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Many musicians who visit this jazz house are honored—if that's the word—by having their portraits done, "in concert," by the house artist. These impressionistic renderings round out a glossy décor that includes flying-saucer light fixtures, burgundy velvet drapes, and some neon wading birds. The Cuban-born clarinettist **Paquito D'Rivera** leads a quintet featuring **Claudio Roditi** April 26-27; pianist **Kenny Barron's** trio claims four nights beginning April 29. Music from nine. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—This blue-on-blue club is the place to find big-league jazz artists. It's an institution and it knows it: how many other clubs sell their own belt buckles? A pair of formidable ensembles trade sets April 23-28, one led by bebop saxophonist **Phil Woods** and the other by **Louie Bellson**, a drummer who served under some of the biggest names of the big-band era, including Duke Ellington, Harry James, and Benny Goodman. **Nancy Wilson** begins a week-long engagement on April 30. Music from nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The venerable country songwriter **Townes Van Zandt** will be here on April 25; **Fred Koller** will be performing on the same bill. **Francesca Beghe**, who comes in on April 26, released her dêbut album not long ago, and her record company, SBK, is convinced that she's going to be a superstar. That wouldn't count for much, except that SBK also said that about Wilson Phillips and Vanilla Ice, both of whom have been perched in the Top Ten since time immemorial. Beghe, who was raised in New York City, has a pretty, Carly Simonish voice, and her brand of pop is soothing, vaguely jazzy, and very ordinary—just the ticket for superstardom, probably. **Steve Forbert** plays on April 27; **Will Downing** shows up on April 30. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors coöperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. A trio consisting of pianist **Kenny Barron**, bassist **Buster Williams**, and drummer **Ben Riley** is here April 22-28. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—An unpretentious storefront café devoted to such things as Irish stew and the *Irish Times.* There's no stage per se, but bohemian musicians gather around a piano and work up some wistful sets while bohemian patrons sit writing in journals, rolling cigarettes, or lingering over one of the two varieties of beer sold here: Budweiser and Rolling Rock. Sin-é means "that's it" in Gaelic and is *not* Sinéad O'Connor's nickname. The café is a nice place to while away an hour, and you never know who'll turn up and tune up. Music generally begins at about eight-thirty.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to vocalist **Dixie Carter** through April 27. Ms. Carter, who stars in CBS's "Designing Women," has nice cheekbones, megawatts of Southern charm, and an abiding yen for the music of John Wallowitch, with whom she studied. She recently released an album of Wallowitch material recorded live in this same room. **Bobby Short** begins a long run on April 30. Sets Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, **Ronny Whyte** presides at the piano through April 27, and **Barbara Carroll** supplants him on April 30. Music from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Every Sunday night, this club, usually dominated by heavy-metal fans, is ceded to a gang of Lindy Hop enthusiasts called the New York Swing Dance Society. An older couple glides across the floor; an eager young man, his tie loosened, his face perspiring, throws his date around like a crazed cossack. The **Ray Abrams** big band performs on April 28. Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club, a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti, is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to pass through nightly. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Young, loud, and rude. N.Y.U. students like it here, as do punks, weekend punks, and anyone with a taste for rough-and-tumble garage-rock music. There's not a lot to look at—except the band and your fellow-patrons. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at ten, Fridays at midnight, and Saturdays at eleven.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A tin-roofed, hubcap-awninged, soul-food-serving, chicken-shack theme bar. Exhibits include a rusted Orange Crush sign, a Pat Boone record jacket, bottle caps spelling out "Welcome," and other peckerwood flotsam. (If this place weren't a restaurant, it could be a flea market.) The clientele is mainly Northern urban. There's live music most nights, including gospel on Mondays and zydeco on Thursdays. Shows after nine. Exotic Southern fare.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through the iffy-looking side door, down the famous fun-house tunnel that's lined with mirrors and corrugated tin, and down a short flight of stairs, you'll find this softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. The First Lady of Bossa Nova, **Astrud Gilberto**, will be here April 23-28; the **Lew Soloff** sextet, with guest saxophonist **Bill Evans**, starts up April 30. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **Les Paul**, the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—With jazz you get eggroll. At this posh-looking two-floor Chinese restaurant, tucked into a midtown skyscraper, you'll find a lot of business people and a lot of hanging plants. In the middle of the main dining room, you'll also find a Steinway grand, which belongs to **Vladimir Shafranov** April 23-28. Performing with him will be bassist **Bob Cranshaw**. Music from six-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music-and-performance space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover changes are enlightened. The **ORDINAIRES**, an oversized, category-bending ensemble that features electrified violins and screeching guitars, performs April 26-27, in their final shows before disbanding. Music after nine.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A cheery, climate-controlled restaurant-and-bar featuring a load of snazzy Gibson guitars, some Washington Square-style portraits of folks like Bo Diddley and Dr. John, and funky French fry–potato chip hybrids. The soul-inflected reggae of **TOOTS AND THE MAYTALS** can be heard here April 24-25. Music after nine. Dining.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar. The imposing singer and blues harpist **JUNIOR WELLS** is in evidence April 25-26. Music from nine-fifteen.

Marquee, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—The current front-runner on the alternative-music scene. The schedule, in part: the **BUTTHOLE SURFERS** on April 25; **REDD KROSS** on April 27; **LUSH** on April 29.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the Hoboken Sound and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. **JOHN WESLEY HARDING**, an impassioned folk-rock singer and yarn-spinner, appears on April 27; also on the bill are the **JUDYBATS**, an inventive, if somewhat self-consciously quirky, pop band. The **SCREAMING TREES**, one of the best of the current crop of media-darling Seattle thrash bands, are on hand on May 1, with **DAS DAMEN**.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—There's more to Michael's Pub than Woody Allen, whose occasional Monday-night Dixieland binges have given the place a little star cachet. Non-filmmakers can usually be found onstage here the rest of the week, in a main dining room that strives for the appearance of a British pub but looks more like a good old American family restaurant. Still, there's a real nice red telephone booth when you walk in the door. Pianist **TERRY WALDO** is currently leading a septet in a salute to Jelly Roll Morton. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a *lot*. There are plenty of niceties if you're so inclined: an ear-popping elevator in which you can mingle with the famous; tables scattered with plastic diamonds and sapphires; and rest-room attendants who hover near the sink asking, "Is the water too warm?" Singer-actress **LAINIE KAZAN** is in sway just now. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—A Western theme bar, attached to a Mexican restaurant. You get walls designed to simulate a log cabin; a buffalo head that blows smoke through its nostrils; a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar; peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. But wait, there's more: a TV that plays tapes of rodeos, New Mexico memorabilia, and live music nightly: country, blues, folk, rock, hillbilly. Shows from ten.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Last fall, after a long slumber, the Tea Room's small, red-gold-and-green cabaret reopened with a series of performances. Singer-pianist **STEVE ROSS**—a nimble, chatty performer who pays homage to latter-day saints like Cole Porter and Noël Coward, and who bobs around like a marionette—appears on April 28. Shows Sundays at eight and, upon demand, ten-thirty. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. The Japanese jazz pianist **YOSUKE YAMASHITA** leads a trio through April 28; **ABDULLAH IBRAHIM** begins work on April 30. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The décor is homey and a little faded, like an attic full of memorabilia, but the music is anything but stale. The **MINGUS DYNASTY BAND** is here through April 28; the **MARLON JORDON** quintet begins a week-long gig on April 30. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA**. Music after nine-thirty.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Two years ago, Sigmund Balka, general counsel of Krasdale Foods, conceived a project to transform his workplace, the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center, in the South Bronx, into the city's largest (five hundred acres) and least likely art park. The center includes a hundred and fifty companies, most of which are grouped into coöperatives, and this year all but one of the companies, together with several banks, have sponsored the placement on their properties of twenty-odd art works. (Most of the works can best be seen by car; for a catalogue and map, write to Sigmund Balka, Krasdale Foods, 400 Food Center Drive, Bronx, NY 10474.) Road signs by Barbara Kruger feature her usual enigmatic black-and-white images and the caption "WHO IS FED? WHO GOES HUNGRY?" Some of the works evoke edibles; Jonathan Silver's "Small Venus," a battered bronze column, at the mouth of the Hunts Point Coöperative Market (the meat market), brings to mind a gnawed leg of lamb. The site's newest art work, erected on March 28, is a Richard Haas mural in a passageway at the meat market. It depicts a room empty except for a chair, a table, and a glowing candle, with a nearby doorway that opens to a Southwestern landscape, complete with cow skull—a sombre sight that doesn't seem to bother the bloody-aproned meat workers one bit.

A few of the works are indoors (for information, call the Bronx Council on the Arts, 931-9500). Ming Fay's waist-high crates can be seen in a hallway at the Hunts Point Terminal Produce Coöperative Association. The crates contain sawdust and knee-high plaster models of fruit, including a Bosc pear, an orange, and a black plum. "Maybe if we leave it long enough we'll end up with a black prune," jokes Bruce Piel, the facility's director.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

Is there a downtown scribe left who hasn't sat back and let a column about Edelweiss write itself? Given just one hour inside this transvestite bar, some petty cash for a couple of "on me" rounds of brandy Alexanders or bourbon neats, and a tape recorder to record the repartee, any Boswell in black could rack up enough wisecracks to rival "The Women." Despite the publicity that has resulted from the tongue-in-ear prose, the limos double-parked outside the club, and the visits from Liza and Madonna and anyone else who wants a good chuckle, it's only the spectators who are laughing. Get past gaping at the manufactured beauties and gawking at the berouged beasts, and there is something drastically unfunny about Edelweiss (167 West 29th Street).

For those working the room on Saturday nights as active participants, there is a constant, anxious jockeying for position, whether at the bar or on the dance floor. All a popular "girl" who can easily latch a john has to do is flick a forelock with dead aim over a cold shoulder in the direction of a less popular sister, and the wounded will immediately dash from one mirror to the next—adjusting a wig here, smoothing a skirt there—in hope that the ensuing reflection will suddenly reveal something worth strutting for. When a slicked-back platinumed trannie straight off the Patrick Nagel poster near the staircase takes over the dance floor by pirouetting into an enclave that could be an homage to Stallone and Russell's gender bending in "Tango & Cash," each member of the gang casually sticks a foot out in her path. There is an unwritten code by which all gentlemen callers agree never to smile or talk to each other. Their approaches may range from cop-a-free-feel coarse to can-we-go-now impatient, but without exception each behaves as if his persona had been entrusted to an understudy. As for the assignations, conversation is as breezy as a mud slide. "What's your fantasy girl?" asks a larger version of a pre-Skippy Annette Funicello of her potential new friend. "Sweet and naïve," he replies. "Naïve, huh?" Annette says, while slurping what's left of her drink. "I can give it a shot. But I think you've come to the wrong sorority house."

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus—The hundred-and-twenty-first version of "The Greatest Show on Earth." (Madison Square Garden. Through April 28. For information about show times and tickets, call 465-6000.)

Cirque du Soleil—Aerialists, clowns, jugglers, and contortionists *avec une différence.* (Battery Park City. Through May 5. For information about show times and tickets, call 509-5550.)

Meredith Monk—"Facing North," her new work, has singing, dancing, and acting. The performers are Ms. Monk and Robert Een. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. April 25-28 at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 529-2318.)

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NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

"Come Let's View Snow Until We're Buried"—A performance piece by Tai Dang, based on a haiku poem; directed by Andres Serrano. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 769-7975. April 26-27 at 8:30.)

Robbie McCauley and Kent Jackman—A performance artist and a comic. (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 650-7100. April 27 at 8 and April 28 at 3.)

Alvin Eng—Presenting "Over the Counter Culture," a one-man performance work cum slide show. (Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Sq. S. April 27 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

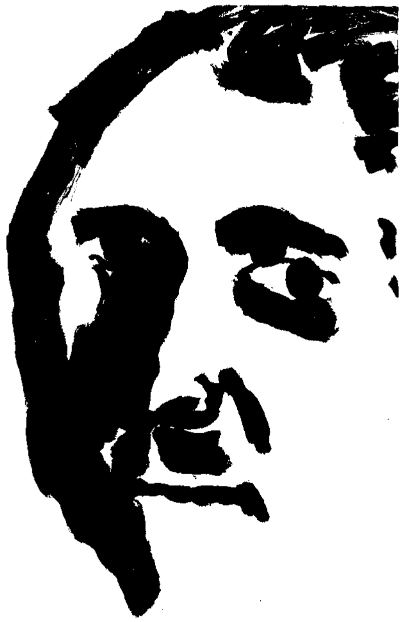
P. S. 122—April 25-28 at 9:30: Richard Elovich in "Someone Else from Queens Is Queer"; directed by Itamar Kubovy. . . . ¶ April 26-28 at 8: Dan Hurlin and Victoria Marks in "Constance and Ferdinand." (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

ARTINESS ain't all bad, you know, even if it got a bad name for itself back there in the eighties, what with all those Rolexes and bespoke suits on the rise in all those death-trap elevators in all those gallery buildings on lower Broadway. On a recent Sunday at P.S. 1, in Long Island City (46-01 21st Street, opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays), the long-lost and lamented spirit of the old High School of Music and Art seemed to preside over a sea of berets and goatees; strange musical instruments; birds of song, peace, and flight; and young visiting curators from Bohemia—the works.

"Out of Site" installations by Maura Sheehan, Joan Jonas, Kim Jones, Lawrence Weiner, Renée Green, Patrick Ireland, and Steve Keister, among others, ruled from the roost of the building's wondrous, crumbling garret spaces. On the third floor, an enormous and complex sound piece by the Fluxus artist Paul Panhuysen involved vibrating strings and overstimulated caged canaries, whose delicate tweets were drowned out by Glass of Water, the neo-punk band at work in the courtyard. In Dove Bradshaw's room, actual doves flew around, while elsewhere Yukinori Yanagi's colorful, graphically designed (a yin-yang symbol crossed with the flag of Japan, for example), multipanel ant farm hung around on its supports, all prepared for an expected community of, it turned out, no-show ants.

Among the most impressive inorganic works on view for the next couple of months is Andrea Blum's altered room, a Naumanesque décor with a dropped ceiling of steel mesh, and space-expanding, mirrored walls. Beatnikest of all, however, are Carol Szymanski's wonderful, eccentric instruments—a lute, a harp, and a horn—which we heard in an impromptu performance by her husband, Barry Schwabsky, who is the editor of *Arts*. He made atonal, dilettantish music, of course.



Self-portrait by Ross Bleckner

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A hundred and twenty-five paintings, drawings, and etchings by Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863). Also on view is a previously unpublished sketchbook of Delacroix's 1828 trip to Touraine. Through June 16. . . . ¶ "The Fauve Landscape" brings together nearly a hundred and twenty-five paintings made between 1904 and 1908 by Derain, Matisse, Braque, and their circle of friends. Through May 5. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Art of the Forties" is a cacophonous, exceptionally interesting show (including around three hundred works in many mediums, all from the museum's collection), chock full of messy meanings and emotions and wild contrasts. There is Matisse's exultant "Jazz," but also the little-known Alton Pickens' perfectly ghoulish "Carnival." There is Pinin Farina's gleaming red sports car, the "Cistalia 202 GT," but also David Siqueiros' rough and mud-caked red "Hands." In short, the exhibition offers the viewer an intense and bifurcated picture of a decade that was itself schizophrenically fragmented. Through April 30. . . . ¶ "Ben Franklin Dreams the New World," a video installation by Peter Rose. Through May 12. . . . ¶ "British Photography from the Thatcher Years" includes seventy-five photographs by Martin Parr, John Davies, Paul Graham, Chris Killip, and Graham Smith. Through April 28. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until autumn.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The Biennial: work by artists whose stars began to rise in the fifties and sixties is on the second floor; artists who emerged in the seventies and eighties are on the third floor; and late-eighties and nineties artists are on the fourth floor. The "AIDS Timeline," by Group Material, is in the lobby. Through June 16. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Leon Golub's first three-dimensional installation, titled "WorldWide," employs photographic details from his wall-size canvases, reproduced onto transparent sheets of plastic. Through June 16. . . . ¶ "Albert Bierstadt." Appropriately subtitled "Art & Enterprise," this show—the first major Bierstadt exhibition in twenty years—is good old vulgar entertainment. This German-born, more or less self-taught late-Hudson River School artist (1830-1902) was an inspired stuntman-painter who relied on a grab bag of compositional and technical tricks to convey his visions of Manifest Destiny. Most often, this means anecdotal scenes and incidental details (dot-and-daub work) in the foreground, with broad and woozy strokes for mountains above and beyond. Through May 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Manifest Destiny," a show of rare nineteenth-century books and illustrations relating to government expeditions into "frontier" areas in the United States. Through April 30. . . . ¶ A show that examines the ecosystems of tropical rain forests around the world, such as those in the Congo basin, the Amazon basin, Madagascar, and Borneo. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 to 9.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—Thirty-five pieces of furniture made over the past thirty years by Wendell Castle. Many of the pieces incorporate trompe-l'oeil and faux-Art Deco effects. Through April 28. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"The Nearest Edge of the World," an exhibition of works in several mediums by nine contemporary artists from Cuba. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—Forty-one examples of ancient Chinese bronze vessels, weapons, and personal ornaments ranging from the Erlitou era (nineteenth century B.C.) to the Han dynasty (third century A.D.). Through June 15. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The museum's collection—begun in 1896 by the three Hewitt sisters, Amy, Eleanor, and Sarah—is ably represented by "A Design Resource," a show of seven hundred objects. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—"From Pontormo to Seurat," a show of sixty-one drawings from the Art Institute of Chicago, including works by Gainsborough, Géricault, Redon, Delacroix, and Degas. Through July 7. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A hundred and six examples of contemporary American bookbinding by such artists as Donald Glaister, Deborah Evetts, and Michael Wilcox. Through June 6. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The Academy's "Annual Exhibition" includes more than a hundred and fifty paintings, sculptures, drawings, and watercolors. Through May 12. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Kingdoms of Land, Sea, and Sky" includes a hundred and eighty zoological woodcuts, engravings, and watercolors by artists and naturalists such as Albrecht Dürer, John James Audubon, Edward Lear, and Maria Sibylla Merian. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open Mondays through Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Road, Long Island City—Noguchi (1904-88), one of the twentieth century's singular talents, designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his sculptures. It contains a wide range of his work—from the early surrealistic biomorphic sculptures to several types of stone carvings—and documentation of his prodigious public art. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with the artist's works. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A retrospective of works by Romare Bearden, which includes a hundred and forty-one oils, collages, and watercolors. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Michael David—A number of motifs that David has worked with over the past few years come together in these strong, waxen paintings. Each contains a kind of metaphysical window in which various cosmic events occur: the partial eclipse of an egg by a cherry- or grape-colored circle, for example. Through April 27. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

David Salle—This is sort of his Old Master show. Salle's palette, always febrile, is now full of Greuze greiges, sickly High Mannerist yellows, poignantly hollow slate blues. The

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ART–Cont'd

background of each of these large paintings is a lightly traced, brushed-up reproduction of some connoisseurish Old World thing. Over these scenes and pastorales Salle imposes his skittish and voluble imagery. The photo-silkscreened inset is an effectively disruptive new device. In "Hamlet Mind," for instance, the masterwork of the show, a photographic inset of a shrouded shape—a woman in purdah, perhaps—seems an icon of perversity in relation to its more commonly fetishistic counterpart, a painted image of two women in Pierrot costumes, looking scared, as if faced with a disapproving master. There are all kinds of strange bondage metaphors in the kinky middle distance of these paintings, where literal-minded feminists had best not prowl. Once again Salle-ome performs his old dance of the veils—that *nouvelle-vague* ballet of mid-thought weirdness, where love slaves beckon and subjects are sometimes loath to reveal their sources, their forms, and, on occasion, their names as well. Through May 4. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

David Storey—There are all sorts of playful conceits in these high-style, fortiesish abstractions that deal with flattened pictorial space. The 2-D/3-D game tends to slip away in the few works with solid expanses of flat color, but the more congested ones, particularly two that are oddly shaped, could keep the mind's eye busy for hours. Through April 27. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

"Artists' Sketchbooks"—Lying flat in spare cases are an intriguing and varied assortment of cahiers, notepads, workbooks, and folders that were once the very private property of some twenty-four artists. Their names suggest an impressive if rather clubbish agenda spanning Abstract Expressionism to the present, from Myron Stout to John Chamberlain to Richmond Burton, with Louise Bourgeois taking her frequent missionary's position as lone matriarch. Through May 4. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Short List—**varujan boghosian,** Bernard, 33 E. 74th St. (through May 26); **james lee byars,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (through May 18); **nathan oliveira,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (open Mondays, through May 8); **marina stern,** Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through May 11).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Ivan Chermayeff—Extremely competent and cheery collages by the noted designer. All of them depict visages—people's, dogs', and cats'—and most attest to the artist's intercontinental life, displaying hotel labels gathered from trips abroad and envelopes sent to his various homes from such foreign lands as Japan and Poland. Through May 4. (Ulysses, 41 E. 57th St.)

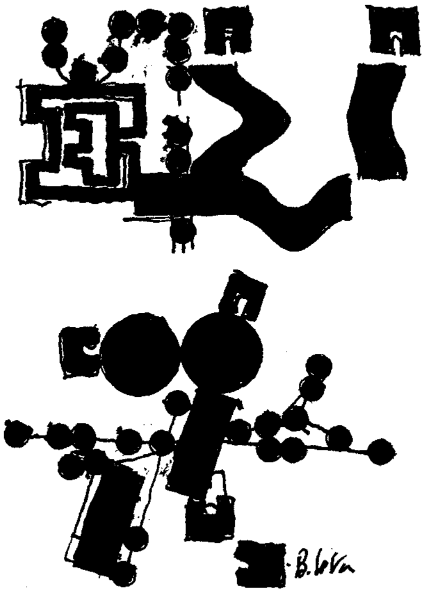
Sue Coe—A retrospective, mostly of nineteen-eighties work. It is interesting and extremely surprising to learn that David Hockney was an important early influence for this London-born, New York-based artist. Coe's politically fierce, classically Expressionistic œuvre has precious little to do with sunshine and easy living. Cruelty and greed, in their most institutionalized forms, are her perennial themes. "Porkopolis," for instance, a gigantic series from 1989, is an unforgettable exposé of the meat industry's more sadistic practices. Coe was trained as a graphic artist, and she is still at her best on paper rather than on canvas. No matter. She is one of the most vivid and effective artists at work today. Through May 4. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Juan Muñoz—Recent work, in this artist's first solo New York show. In the north gallery is a glib and flashy installation titled "New York Floorpiece," which consists of a layer of geometrically patterned rubber floor coverings and two bronze figures on a shelf surveying the transformed space. The sculptures in the south gallery—wall reliefs resembling shutters and balconies and, on the floor, five posturing bronze figures on spherical bases—are much stronger. Their unflinching austerity denotes a laconic lampooning of traditional Spanish hyperformality. Through April 27. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Short List—**lennart anderson,** Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (through April 27); **lynn chadwick,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through April 27); **george condo,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through May 24); **leo copers,** Tilton, 24 W. 57th St. (through May 4); **marcel duchamp** and **gonzalo fonseca,** Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through April 30); **helen frankenthaler,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through May 11); **sidney goodman,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through May 11); **david humphrey,** McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through April 27); **sheila isham,** Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. (through May 4); **piet mondrian,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through April 27); **kenzo okada,** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. (through May 4); **jack youngerman,** Washburn, 41 E. 57th St. (through April 27).

GALLERIES—SoHo

John M. Armleder—This Swiss artist attracted a lot of attention in the mid-eighties for his furniture/painting combines, whose wry examination of the decorative was rooted in conceptual Dadaism and performance art. His aesthetic, however, is not aging well, as this display of new works attests. The most intriguing are two boards—one plywood, one peg—with little bulbs stuck in them that flash randomly with a nervous disco flutter, and a cluster of three garish crystal chandeliers lying on the floor. But even these well-dressed works bare little. Through May 18. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)



Self-portrait by Barry Le Va

Domenico Bianchi—The tour de force in this exhibition is an exquisite five-panel oil painting depicting a kind of warm light. Four of the panels are yellow, one is red; the first panel, in which one wisp of light embraces another, is certain to win over all romantics. Through April 27. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Ross Bleckner—New paintings that look more beautiful than ever. They are macabre, gaseous, insomniac things. Nearly all of Bleckner's most familiar pictorial symbols come into play in these complex works, either directly or by implication, including chandeliers and trophies, mysterious spotlights, directional arrows, and Tachiste stains like molecules. What's new is their sweep. Subtly shaded, silvery strokes in the work now seem to be agents of energy rather than of a certain starlit indolence. And symbolic devices, formerly static elements in Bleckner's paintings, are now subsumed by waltzing movements of painted light that fall somewhere between the cosmic-sublime and Liberace. Through April 27. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Jackie Ferrara—It has been nearly five years since Ferrara has exhibited in New York, and, as these three very beautiful sculptures attest, the wait has been too long. As always, each work is a variation on a pyramid and is made of delicately stacked lengths of wood. Here the wood is poplar, with stained sections of sandstone red or gray. These quietly intelligent and architecturally suggestive works are built on an odd scale, somewhere between buildings and models. Through May 18. (Klein, 594 Broadway.)

Robert Grosvenor—Two huge architectural sculptures. One is a concrete-block "warehouse" with a low, corrugated-metal roof; the other is a Plexiglas canopied pavilion, housing a minimalist sculpture. Both exhibit strong figurative references and an almost incidental relationship to their material. Through May 4. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Jan Groth—An elegant and dignified exhibition of bronze sculptures—more like bronze drawings—that consist of thin bent sticks propped against the wall, with surfaces worked like Giacometti's. Through May 1. (Brown, 560 Broadway. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

Michael Hurson—Hurson's work has always had a deceptive, doodlish informality. The current show consists of drawings and a few silk-screen paintings, all of which have an unsettling sense of irony. The paintings are the most beautiful and pungent works on display. In one called "Only Child," a boy with a broken arm and a stunned expression is being dragged by his mom, who is in such a rush that she is reduced to a half-invisible sequence of geometric shapes. In another, a multipanel work titled "House for Sale," silk-screen smudges animate every surface with illustrative delight, except for a flat "For Sale" sign, which sits in the picture in indelible, stark contrast, like a reproach. Through May 2. (Cooper, 149 Wooster St.)

Karen Kilimnik—A very strong first solo show, consisting of five installation works, composed and combined in such a seemingly anarchic way that the gallery looks like a girl's bedroom after a visit from demonic intruders. The subject matter is bloody and tragic—a schoolyard massacre, the killing of the czar Nicholas II and his family—and the artist has the most fascinatingly bizarre way of creating images: big plastic eggs partially decorated, as if by a hyperactive eight-year-old, to resemble Fabergé; or blood in the form of a few shavings of dried-up red acrylic paint. There are makeshift disco balls, a mechanical dog who keeps bumping into things, a tape loop of the Boomtown Rats' "I Don't Like Mondays," trails of glitter, and other perverse twists on wholesome representations. While the work of some other practitioners of the currently popular scatter aesthetic has an underlayer of savvy colored by a sense of resentment—the spirit of Dada crossed with that of punk—Kilimnik's installations have the authenticity of outsider art. They deliver a disturbing visual bite with an endearingly fragile, fanzine naïveté. Through April 27. (303 Gallery, 89 Greene St.)

Guillermo Kuitca—If you've ever found yourself transfixed by a map, allowing your imagination to roam down roads you never intend to travel, then these essentially abstract paintings in the form of maps are certain to give your mind a workout. There is a great variety of texture and character to the works, whose subjects range from a section of Lausanne, marked as if for bombing, to a Purgatory-like region of Mexico, with high-contrast crinkly mountains and an endless number of towns named San Juan de la Cruz. Through May 2. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Lynn McCarty—Small, heavily worked paintings on Masonite. The works have an almost incidental simplicity, and appear to illustrate unobservable physical phenomena, like magnetic fields and sound waves. Through April 27. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Marlene McCarty / John Lindell—The AIDS-activist collective Gran Fury has been filling the art world's social-conscience slot during the past few years. Most recently, the work of individual members—like these two—has been gaining strength, resulting in a new aggressiveness, an art intended to wreak havoc on art conventions. McCarty's first solo exhibition (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.) is a powerful three-piece installation made up of thirty-four raw canvases butted edge to edge, with a single strip of words running continuously across the center. In one section, called "Crash," the strip resembles a stripe on a towel, and the words mimic offensive car-culture lingo about women as sex machines. ("She's an engine eatin' pit of destruction," "6000 pounds of thrust," and "Bend over I'll drive.") "Burn," in which the strip looks like a tire track, is all about the machismo of war. Through May 11. / Lindell's work (at Audiello, 142 Greene St.) is more directly tied in to the formalist language of art, which he naughtily undermines with gay sexual imagery. A series of sculptures and wall works comes with do-it-yourself instruction kits. Wood sculptures titled "Social Structures," which suggest a corral, or the proverbial fence with two sides, are the most abstract works. In the back room is a hanging mobile that loads an innocuous decorative form with coded sexual imagery. Through May 4. (A concurrent show is at Cugliani, 508 Greenwich St.) . . . ¶ McCarty and Lindell have also collaborated on a series of works that blow the idea of artistic authorship sky-high. Some of the pieces are by him, some by her; in some he uses her imagery, in others she uses his; and some are by both of them, being either themselves or each other. Most of the pieces are defiantly aggressive, completely controlled, and self-assured, but there are also moments of surprising poetry, such as a haunting drawing that combines one of Lindell's Tao-shaped semenlike spurts with McCarty's purple circle containing the phrase "The Second Coming," written in a similar shape but carrying a different set of meanings. Through April 27. (Watson, 241 Lafayette St.)

Elie Nadelman (1882-1946)—This Polish-born artist has always been considered an American, but the many drawings in this show, roughly half of which were made before he emigrated here, make his roots in European modernism—and particularly Cubism—quite clear. The show also includes three exquisite bronze sculptures. One is of a consummately elegant buck composed of a series of contrasting curves; it was made in 1915, a year after his emigration. The other two are a hollow head, made in Paris, from 1906-07, and a female bust from 1926-28. Through May 11. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Richard Prince—For the past decade and a half, Prince has enacted a particularly potent social terrorism with an art rooted in conceptual strategies. Known initially for appropriated photographs, primarily from advertising, that commodified gesture and desire, in recent years he has created paintings that conduct an often fascinating inquiry into the relevance of the medium. The six recent, large-scale paintings on display in this show are by far his most complex. They take on aspects of postwar painting—from the heroic scale of Ab-Ex through the cartoonery of Pop to the geometric structure of minimalism—and, more specifically, an array of individuals, in particular Rothko, Rauschenberg, Polke, and Halley. Not only are the works historically inclusive but they also refer to Prince's own history, in that they contain an amalgam of images and techniques utilized in his past paintings. While these works are endlessly skillful, they also convey an underlying sense that painting has lost its efficacy; they are as much ghosts of painting as Prince's photographs were ghosts of photography. This quality is the source of Prince's strength. Through May 11. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Ray Smith—The painter's first show of sculptures. Smith has combined various found elements (crutches, a tattered Chinese signpost) with fabricated ones to create playful and articulate totemic sculptures that recall late Picasso, González, and Bourgeois. Through April 27. (Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St.)

Tony Tasset / B. Wurtz—Tasset's love of the well-crafted object peeks through this oddly stately show of art works made of packaging materials: a wood pallet and a ball of corrugated cardboard on a corrugated pedestal, for example. On the floor, near a wall, lies a wrinkled drop cloth that looks casually tossed but is in fact artfully arranged. / Wurtz wanders along boring domestic tangents in this show. Among the works on display are childish constructions of pieces of clothing stuck in wall-mounted aluminum cans, accompanied by texts such as "Look at yourself" and "Don't look at art. Look at the world," and a wall full of aluminum pie tins painted in pretty colors, as if made on a rainy afternoon at day camp. Through May 4. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

Joan Wallace—Constructed paintings by half of the now defunct Wallace & Donohue team. They are anti-formalist and anti-patriarchal, and each has a twist or two. A painting of a woman's profile made up of Frank Stella pinstripes is actually an adaptation of a Sherrie Levine collage. The painting is on horizontal panels, which slide open to reveal a blowup of a Robert Morris portrait of himself in S & M garb. This loaded juxtaposition of images deals with the struggle between form and content, the art system and

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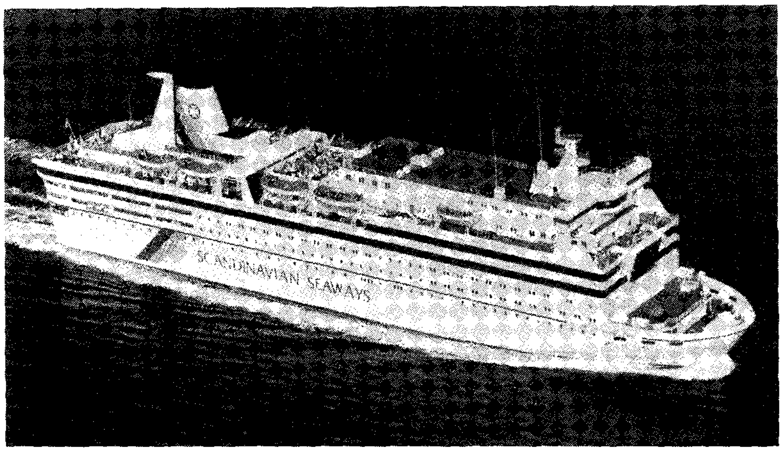

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its subversion, and the title—"Bob's Your Uncle"—contains a naughty insider joke about patriarchy and authorship. Despite a certain cleverness, however, this piece, like the others in the show, is essentially a nonartist's art. Through May 11. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

H. C. WESTERMANN (1922-81)—Drawings and prints by the father of American regionalist surreal funky figuration. Although this is not the best selection one could gather, don't worry: there's no such thing as a pedestrian Westermann. Through May 11. (Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway.)

"PICASSO'S PARADE"—"Parade" (1917) was a historic and controversial ballet with a score by Satie, a libretto by Cocteau, choreography by Massine, and costumes and sets by Picasso. This small but thorough exhibition includes virtually all of the artist's preparatory drawings, which reveal a more technical Picasso than that of his "art" drawings. The curtain for "Parade," on display here in photographic form, was fifty-five feet long, constituting Picasso's largest painting. The costumes, principally the three Cubist constructions for the Managers (also represented in photographs), are some of the artist's most inventive sculptures. Also on view is Satie's luscious handwritten score. Through June 13. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

GROUP SHOW—An exhibition of drawings by nineteen women, including Louise Bourgeois, Jane Kaplowitz, Judy Pfaff, Kiki Smith, Joan Jonas, Joan Mitchell, Ellen Phelan, Elyn Zimmerman, Susan Rothenberg, and Elizabeth Murray. No theme has been declared here, and yet all of these works suggest certain shared characteristics: an offhand, whimsical, or humorous approach, and an idiom at once figurative and abstract. It's a surprisingly coherent and pleasant show. Through May 30. (GuidArte, 379 West Broadway.)

SHORT LIST—**ERNEST BRIGGS** and **EDWARD DUGMORE**, Shapolsky, 99 Spring St. (through May 25); **PAUL BOWEN**, Shainman, 560 Broadway, (through May 18); **STANLEY BOXER**, Dorsky, 578 Broadway (through May 11); **LOUISA CHASE**, Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (through April 27); **CHRISTIAN ECKART**, RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway (through May 18); **SAM GILLIAM**, Fendrick, 568 Broadway, entrance on Prince St. (through May 25); **MARY HEILMAN**, Hearn, 39 Wooster St. (through May 18); **PHYLLIS HERFIELD**, Helander, 415 West Broadway, and O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway (through April 27); **PAUL JENKINS**, Gimpel, 415 West Broadway (through May 18); **SUSAN LAUFER**, Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway (through April 27); **BARRY LE VA**, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through April 27); **RONA PONDICK**, Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through May 4); **ARCHIE RAND**, Exit Art, 578 Broadway (through May 18); **JOSEPH STELLA** and **MILTON AVERY**, Snyder, 588 Broadway (through May 25); **CLEMENS WEISS**, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through May 25).

OTHER GALLERIES

"INTERROGATING IDENTITY"—Another politically correct exhibition with works of wildly varying interest. Unlike similar shows, this is not one in which the context is more interesting than the work. Featured are artists from the United States, Canada, and England who are members of racial minorities, principally blacks, Native Americans, and Arabs. Whitfield Lovell's large drawings of clothes with allegorical renderings atop them and Albert Chong's shamanistic tableaux of chairs decorated with shells, feathers, coconuts, and dreadlocks address the idea of portraiture in the broadest sense of the word. Racial dichotomies are expressed articulately by Ingrid Pollard, in a photo-and-text work that discusses the alienation of English blacks from the British countryside, and by Glenn Ligon, in a word painting that describes the dilemma of a black artist using a white vocabulary. A few of the works are so universal in their appeal that the issue of racial identity drops away. Such is the case with Lani Maestro's paintings on fabric of an ear, a hand, a grid of eyes, and a screaming mouth, accompanied by a handwritten poem about a despotic general who likes to display the body parts of his victims. The paintings are chilling by themselves and do not need the text to convey their meaning. Through May 18. (Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

THERE'S a riveting exhibition by Richard Misrach at Pyramid Gallery (568 Broadway, entrance on Prince Street; through April 27). Here Misrach, who is known for his landscape work, has expanded his subject, and he pulls off the contemporary twist that he goes after in much of his work. He has photographed two copies of *Playboy* that he found at a nuclear test site in Nevada, where they had been used for target practice. Though only the covers themselves were actual targets, Misrach has found some startling images within; the level of violence in these shot-up pictures, many of them of women, is extreme. A portrait of Ray Charles has been gashed so brutally that it's hard to remember that it's only his image that has been punctured and torn. Another of the photographs is a close-up of an interview with Sting that ran in one of the issues. Recalling a dream, Sting says, "This big hole appeared, and out of it crawled these four enormous, prehistoric blue turtles with these wonderful scaly necks and fantastic heads. They were kind of drunk on their own virility, very athletic and macho, and they were showing off in my back garden, doing back flips, jumping on tables and smashing glasses."

This group of photographs serves as a powerful underlining of what we already know about racism and sexism, and the violence that so often lurks around them.

EIKOH HOSOE—This artist lives in Tokyo and is not generally known here, but he has been an influential photographer in Japan for decades. This show concentrates on his nudes from 1969 to 1971, and while the work is not as dramatic as some of his other pictures, its purity comes across with strong impact. Hosoe juggles figuration and abstraction expertly, and he achieves a sculptural quality through his use of graphic elements, like cropping, toning, and highlighting. These works are reminiscent of the nudes of Bill Brandt and of Robert Mapplethorpe—and the echoes enhance their effect. The small, intimate pictures add up to a powerful meditation on repetition and difference. Through May 4. (Photofind, 138 Spring St.)

"BRITISH PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE THATCHER YEARS"—A show of seventy-five photographs—by Paul Graham, Chris Killip, John Davies, Martin Parr, and Graham Smith—that comment on the quality of life in Britain for the middle and lower classes in recent years. Not surprisingly, the show succeeds where the photographers succeed, and fails when the pictures are weak. For example, most of Graham's pictures of Northern Ireland have been printed at superscale, but why? For art's sake, we suspect. In one image that hasn't been so blown up, something strong happens: it's a red-and-black photo of hands praying—and it burns emotionally. Through April 28. (Museum of Modern Art.)

SHORT LIST—**BRUCE BARNBAUM** and **KAREN HALVERSON**, Witkin, 415 West Broadway (opens at noon on Saturdays, through May 25); **JOAN FONTCUBERTA**, Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through May 22), and Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. (opens at noon on Saturdays, through May 15); **ANNIE LEIBOVITZ**, Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through May 4); **ROBERT LEVIN**, Borden, 560 Broadway (through April 27); **ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG**, Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through May 4); **SEBASTIÃO SALGADO**, International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6; through June 11).

MUSIC

IN the midst of the Mozart year, there is (perhaps to sound a note of dissent?) an unofficial Gluck revival going on. Already this season, New York has seen two versions of "Orfeo" and one of "Paride ed Elena"; Chicago has just done "Alceste" and the Met is set to do it; and the young company that calls itself L'Opéra Français de New York will mount "Iphigénie en Aulide," one of the composer's noblest and richest dramas, on April 27-28 at Florence Gould Hall.

"Iphigénie en Aulide"—the story of Agamemnon's agonizing decision to sacrifice his daughter for national purpose—has been revived less often than its sister opera, "Iphigénie en Tauride" (whither the girl is taken by Diana just on the point of being sacrificed). The former score was Gluck's opening salvo in Paris, where he spent his last operatically active years. Agamemnon may be his finest creation for the lower male voice; the Bulgarian bass Boris Christoff loved the role and sang it (in Italian) in several revivals. The ardor and seriousness of the whole work was a great inspiration for the young Wagner, who interrupted the composition of "Lohengrin" to arrange the work for the German stage. That arrangement was revived several seasons back at the Waterloo Festival; it was a rather undramatic concert performance, but still the power of the work was felt. To see it in French, on the stage, carefully prepared, should be a privilege.

(The box-office number for Avery Fisher Hall is 874-2424; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 415-5440.)

OPERA

"LE DONNE RIVALI" AND "LO SPOSO DELUSO"—A conglomerate of the operas by, respectively, Cimarosa and Mozart. Both were composed to the same anonymous libretto, but Mozart's remained uncompleted. In this reconstruction, staged by Eve Shapiro, all of Mozart's sections will be heard, interpolated into the Cimarosa score. Will Crutchfield conducts. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. 874-7515. April 24 and April 26 at 8, and April 28 at 2.)

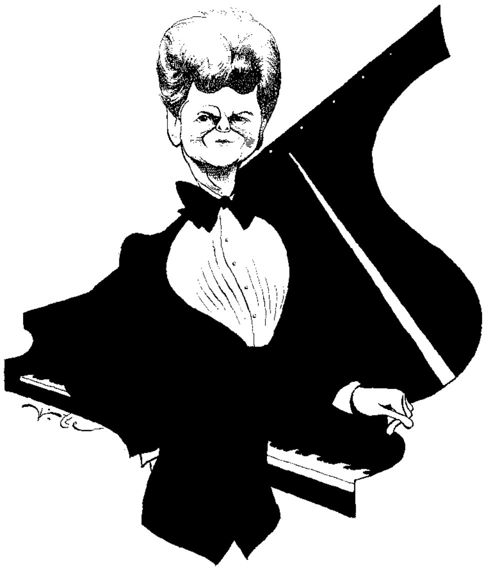
L'OPÉRA FRANÇAIS DE NEW YORK—Presenting a fully staged production of Gluck's "Iphigénie en Aulide," based on Racine's version of Euripides' tragedy. Directed by Susan Melvoin and conducted by Yves Abel. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. April 27 at 3 and April 28 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Yoel Levi conducts Mahler's Ninth Symphony. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 23 at 7:30.) . . . ¶ Giuseppe Sinopoli conducts Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony, as well as Respighi's "Fountains of Rome" and "Pines of Rome." (Avery Fisher Hall. April 25 and April 27 at 8.) . . . ¶ Giuseppe Sinopoli conducts Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony, as well as Respighi's "Fountains of Rome" and "Roman Festivals." (Avery Fisher Hall. April 26 at 8.) . . . ¶ Zubin Mehta conducts Mahler's First Symphony and Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, featuring Van Cliburn in a rare appearance. (Carnegie Hall. May 1 at 8.)

JUILLIARD ORCHESTRA—Paul Zukofsky conducts music by Busoni, Debussy (his "Première Rapsodie," with clarinettist Sharon Kam), and Holst ("The Planets"). (Alice Tully Hall. April 23 at 8. For free tickets, which are required, call 874-7515.)

BOSTON SYMPHONY—Seiji Ozawa conducts Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique" and the



Van Cliburn, with the New York Philharmonic

American première of Schnittke's Cello Concerto, with soloist Mstislav Rostropovich. (Carnegie Hall. April 26 at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducts Beethoven's Sixth Symphony and Act III, Scene 3, of Wagner's "Siegfried," featuring soprano Linda Kelm and tenor Richard Versalle. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. April 26 at 8, April 27 at 7:30, and April 28 at 2.)

Vienna Chamber Orchestra—Philippe Entremont conducts Mozart's Symphony No. 33, Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola (with soloists Ola Rudner and Ilse Wincor), and Piano Concerto in E-Flat, K. 271, in which he doubles as piano soloist. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 28 at 3.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Yuri Temirkanov conducts Borodin's "Prince Igor" Overture, Sibelius's Second Symphony, and Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2, with pianist André Watts. (Carnegie Hall. April 29 at 8.)

Little Orchestra Society—Soprano Erie Mills and violinist Chee-Yun are featured soloists in an all-Vivaldi concert conducted by Dino Anagnost. (Alice Tully Hall. May 1 at 8.)

Clarion Concerts—Newell Jenkins directs soloists and a period-instrument orchestra in a program that includes cantatas by Giovanni Battista Sammartini and Joseph Martin Kraus, a Mozart aria, and Zelenka's "Lamentationes Jeremiae Prophetae." (Merkin Concert Hall. April 23 at 8.)

Mozart Masses in Concert—The sacred-music series of the Mozart Bicentennial at Lincoln Center continues with the Missa Brevis, K. 259; the Litaniae Lauretanae B.V.M., K. 109; and a motet, a church sonata, and two symphonies. Featuring the North Carolina School of the Arts Symphony Orchestra and Cantata Singers, directed by Serge Zehnacker. (Alice Tully Hall. April 25 at 8.)

Western Wind—The vocal sextet, augmented by various guests, presents a wide-ranging program of songs about nature. (Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew, 263 W. 86th St. April 26 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New York Choral Society—John Daly Goodwin directs short works by Giovanni Gabrieli, Randall Thompson, and Vaughan Williams, as well as eight movements from Rachmaninoff's Vespers. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. April 26 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the performance.)

Bronx Arts Ensemble Chorus and Orchestra—Guillermo Figueroa directs the New York première of Roberto Sierra's "Bayoán," an oratorio based on the writings of the nineteenth-century Puerto Rican educator and patriot Eugenio María de Hostos. (Alice Tully Hall. April 27 at 8.)

"Requiem: In the Midst of Life"—The première of a new work by Warren Swenson commemorating those who have died of AIDS; with Robert Barrows directing a chorus, an orchestra, and soloists Gale Limansky (soprano) and John Ostendorf (baritone). (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. April 28 at 7:30. Admission by contribution.)

Ascension Chorus and Orchestra—Dennis Keene directs music by Ives, Britten, and Messiaen, as well as new works by Ned Rorem and Gregg Smith. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. April 28 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Juilliard Chamber Singers—In February, musicologist Michael Ochs announced that he had discovered three long-missing texts Mozart had penned for canons (one to his own music, the other two to music by Wenzel Trnka, an eighteenth-century professor of medicine at the University of Pest). As with several of Mozart's other canons, the words are breathtakingly salacious (as in the newly recovered "Leck mich im Arsch," K. 231, which the Köchel catalogue's index demurely reduces to "L. m. i. a.," and which modesty prevents us from translating), and were bowdlerized prior to their publication. Judith Clurman directs their American premières, in an all-Mozart concert that also includes a piano four-hands sonata, several horn duets, and two divertimentos, all performed by Juilliard students. (Alice Tully Hall. April 30 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 874-7515.) . . . **note:** Mr. Ochs will present a pre-concert lecture about his discovery, at 7.

RECITALS

Prokofiev Celebration—Concerts and lectures in honor of the centennial of Prokofiev's birth (which falls on April 23). April 22 at 6:30: A lecture by the composer's biographer Harlow Robinson on "Prokofiev in America and Elsewhere." . . . ¶ April 22 at 8: The Manhattan String Quartet, pianist Christopher O'Riley, and others perform Prokofiev's first two string quartets, his Quintet for Strings and Winds, and his "Overture on Hebrew Themes." . . . ¶ April 23 at 6:30: Mr. Robinson gives a lecture on Prokofiev's relationship to Soviet musical politics. . . . ¶ April 23 at 8: Pianists Daniel Epstein and Christopher O'Riley, flutist Ransom Wilson, and cellist Susan Salm perform the Piano Sonatas No. 7 and No. 8, the Flute Sonata, and the Cello Sonata. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.)

Composers' Forum—A benefit concert featuring music by John Cage, Leroy Jenkins, and Takehisa Kosugi. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. April 22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 334-0216.)

Gustav Rivinius—The German cellist, who brought home the gold from the 1990 Tchaikovsky International Competition, performs Bernd Alois Zimmermann's Sonata for Solo Cello; and his brother, pianist Paul Rivinius, accompanies him in sonatas by Beethoven, Brahms, and Debussy, as well as Webern's "Three Short Pieces," Op. 11. (92nd Street Y. April 23 at 8.)

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and Cecile Licad—The violinist and the pianist team up to present sonatas by Mozart, Beethoven, and Prokofiev. (Alice Tully Hall. April 24 at 8.)

Malcolm Bilson—Performing four Mozart sonatas on the fortepiano (K. 282, K. 310, K. 311, and K. 322). (Merkin Concert Hall. April 24 at 8.) . . . **note:** On April 22 at 8, also Merkin Concert Hall, Mr. Bilson will present a lecture-performance in which he points up the differences between historically informed and modern approaches to Mozart's piano concertos.

Eugenia Zukerman and Anthony Newman—The flutist and the harpsichordist present works by Johann Sebastian Bach and his son Wilhelm Friedemann. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0855. April 24 at 6.)

Benita Valente and Tatiana Troyanos—The soprano and the mezzo-soprano collaborate with pianist Warren Jones in a program of arias, songs, and duets by Mozart, Brahms, Bizet, Gounod, Fauré, and Berg. (92nd Street Y. April 24 at 8.)

Four Nations Ensemble—The early-instrument group performs works by Vivaldi, Biber, Michel Blavet, Bach (his Fifth "Brandenburg" Concerto), and Handel (his cantata "Lucretia," with soprano Judith Malafronte). (Friends Meeting House, 15 Rutherford Pl., between Second and Third Aves. April 24 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Vinland Duo—Oboist Virginia Brewer and pianist Mary Ann Brown are joined by soprano Margaret Astrup for a program of Scandinavian music, including works by Johan Helmich Roman, Carl Nielsen, and Agathe

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MUSIC–Cont'd

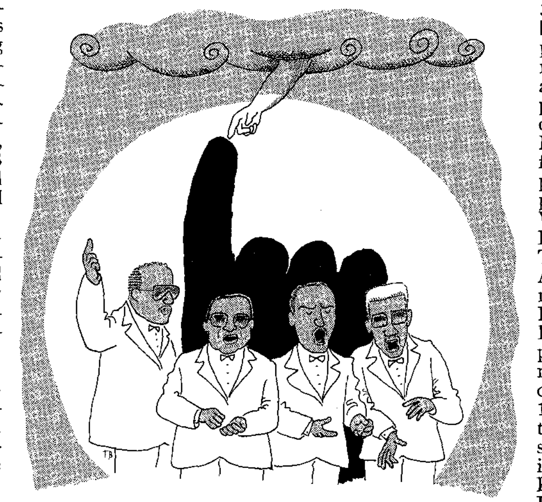
Backer Grøndahl. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. April 24 at 8.)

Mannes Contemporary Ensemble—April 24 at 8: Works by Lou Harrison, George Crumb, Earle Brown, and others. . . . ¶ April 29 at 8: Works by Varèse, Jolivet, Chou Wen-Chung, and others. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. No tickets necessary.)

Bargemusic—Joseph Villa performs Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Sonata, and is joined by string players for chamber music by Mozart and Taneyev. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. April 25 at 7:30 and April 28 at 4.)

Guarneri Quartet—Performing a Beethoven trio and string quartets by Mozart and Dvořák. (Weill Recital Hall. April 25 at 8.)

John Van Buskirk—The pianist, performing on an Érard piano dating from the eighteen-thirties, presents an all-Liszt program. (Bösendorfer Center, 406 E. 79th St. April 25 at 8. No tickets necessary.)



The Fairfield Four, at the Carnegie Hall Centennial Festival

Music Before 1800 Productions—Tenor John Olund and baritone Robert Kuehn, accompanied by Louise Basbas, offer American works from the final decades of the eighteenth century to the present, including premières of new works by Harvey Burgett and Peter Perrin. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. 242-4770. April 25 at 8.)

Eliot Fisk—The classical guitarist performs works by Bach, Paganini, Turina, and others. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 26 at 7.)

Chamber Music at Carnegie Hall—Isaac Stern hosts a program of Bartók, Dohnányi, and Stravinsky that spotlights clarinettist Sharon Kam and the Orion and Diaz String Quartets. (Weill Recital Hall. April 26 at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Augmented by guests who include soprano Lisa Saffer and pianist Peter Serkin, performing works by Mozart, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Oliver Knussen (the ensemble's composer in residence). (Alice Tully Hall. April 26 at 8 and April 28 at 5.)

Sequentia—The early-music vocal and instrumental quartet presents medieval songs, including an excerpt from "Beowolf" performed as it might have been in the seventh century, and pieces from thirteenth-century Spain and Germany; performed in the Temple of Dendur. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 27 at 8.)

Kathleen Battle—The soprano, accompanied by pianist Margo Garrett, sings Handel arias and songs by Mozart, Liszt, Rachmaninoff, and Strauss. (Carnegie Hall. April 27 at 8.)

Alfred Brendel—Pianist, performing an all-Mozart program. (92nd Street Y. April 27 at 8.)

Samuel Baron—The flutist performs unaccompanied works by Debussy, Varèse, and Berio, and is joined by assisting musicians for works by Mozart, Beethoven, and Ezra Laderman. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 27 at 8:30.)

Music and More—The concert-and-commentary series presents pianists Israela Margalit, Alan Feinberg, and Jerome Lowenthal, performing works by Mussorgsky, Glinka, Prokofiev, and Rachmaninoff (including his Romance for—count 'em!—six hands at one piano). (Merkin Concert Hall. April 28 at 3.)

Wave Hill Trio—The violin-cello-piano trio performs chamber music by Haydn, Dvořák, and Clara Schumann. (Wave Hill House, W. 249th St. and Independence Ave., Bronx. April 28 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Friends of Music Consortium—Chamber music by Bach, Mozart, Haydn, and Liszt, performed by, among others, keyboard players Anthony and Mary Jane Newman and the Odyssey Chamber Ensemble. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. April 28 at 5. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players—Premières of works written for the ensemble by six composers. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 28 at 8.)

Dmitri Berlinsky—The Soviet violinist, a first-prize winner at the Paganini and Montreal competitions, performs works by Schnittke, Beethoven, Franck, and Tchaikovsky; assisted by pianist Rohan De Silva. Presented by Young Concert Artists. (92nd Street Y. April 30 at 8.)

Double Edge—The piano duo of Edmund Niemann and Nurit Tilles performs, among other works, Poulenc's Sonata for Two Pianos; premières of pieces by Judith Weir, Ioannis Pathas, and James Tenney; and the American première of "Two Lullabies for Two Pianos," composed by Benjamin Britten as audition pieces in 1936, but forgotten until they resurfaced recently in the Britten-Pears Library in England. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 870-2824. April 30 at 8.)

Helicon Ensemble—Albert Fuller directs the ensemble in Baroque concertos. Soloists include violinists Stanley Ritchie and Jaap Schröder. (Weill Recital Hall. May 1 at 8.)

Elizabeth Mann—The flutist is joined by pianist Rita Sloan and cellist Annabelle Hoffman in a program that includes the première of Bruce Adolphe's "Vision" and George Crumb's "Vox Balanae," a 1987 work in which the performers, wearing masks, evoke the sounds of whales. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 1 at 8.)

New York Woodwind Quintet—Performing chamber music by Beethoven, Jean Françaix, and Irving Fine, as well as the Wind Quintet (1987) by one of the group's members, oboist Ronald Roseman. (Paul Recital Hall, Juilliard School, 144 W. 66th St. May 1 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 874-7515.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Liza Minnelli—The spiky black styling of Liza's hair in her current Atlantic City publicity photograph makes her look like Edward Scissorhands, but then there's always been something cutting and sudden lurking behind that vulnerability and cracked gloss. It's the resulting tension that gives this entertainer her power. In the twenty-five years since her local cabaret début, at the Persian Room, she's acquired so many guises that she can now shuffle them like a deck of cards: she's Judy's parenting daughter, Pookie Adams, Sally Bowles, the clubland goddess in a flat Warhol print, De Niro's Francine Evans, the Betty Ford graduate, the Sinatra sidekick, and, most recently, the Eurodisco queen, in her Pet Shop Boys-produced album, "Results." And when she's frozen in the spotlight after the last note of a showstopper, you can't help but love her. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. April 23, April 25-27, and May 1, all at 8, and April 28 at 3. Through May 12.)

Jane's Addiction / Happy Mondays—Here's a pairing of disparate bands, each deeply unwholesome and compelling in its own way. The L.A. noir-thrash quartet Jane's Addiction "chronicles a kind of aimless moral drift," according to a straight-faced Los Angeles *Times*, and five years into its career the band is suddenly finding that its glamorously creepy aesthetic is filling up arenas. The brilliant and zonked Manchester stumblebums in Happy Mondays, on the other hand, have imported hook-filled and highly danceable house-rock, wherein England's Angry Young Men get too stoned to stay mad, and they are the real reason to attend this show. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. April 24 at 8.)

Music of Tim Buckley—Performed by the Horse Flies, Syd Straw, Richard Hell, G. E. Smith, Julia Heyward, et al. (St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 834-8794. April 26 at 8.)

Salute to Mario Bauza—With Dizzy Gillespie, Graciela, Rudy Calzado, Mr. Bauza and his Afro-Cuban Jazz Concert Orchestra, and others. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. April 27 at 8.)

Dharma Swara Balinese Gamelan—American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. April 27 at 2 and 4. No charge beyond museum admission.

Charles Brown—Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 27 at 8.

Gamelan Son of Lion—Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. May 1 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

"Lyrics & Lyricists"—The penultimate concert of this season's series features songs from "Babes in Arms" and "The King and I." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. April 28 at 2:30 and 8, and April 29 at 2 and 8.)

Carnegie Hall Centennial Festival Concerts—April 27 at 8: Steve Coleman, Ed Blackwell, Tommy Flanagan, and others. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800.) . . . ¶ April 28 at 7: Mel Tormé, George Shearing, Gerry Mulligan, Dizzy Gillespie, Wynton Marsalis, and others. (Carnegie Hall.) . . . ¶ April 30 at 7: Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Peter, Paul & Mary, and others. (Carnegie Hall.) . . . ¶ April 30 at 8: The Nashville Bluegrass Band and the Fairfield Four. (Weill Recital Hall.)

Benefit Concert—Aaron Neville, John Cale, Dr. John, Marvis Martin, and others. (St. Ann's Church. April 24 at 8.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the Pittsburgh Pirates, April 26 at 7:40, and April 27-28 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the San Diego Padres, April 30-May 1 at 7:40.

Yankees—Vs. the Detroit Tigers, April 22-24 at 7:30.

(The Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499, and the Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. Through May 6. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8, and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Sakura Matsuri—A weekend-long celebration of the flowering cherry trees in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. The park's staff has assembled two days' worth of activities and demonstrations (like origami, taiko drumming, and dollmaking) to supplement the usual blossom sniffing. (1000 Washington Ave., near Grand Army Plaza. April 27-28, from 10 to 6. No tickets necessary.)

Sexagenarian—The Empire State Building celebrates its sixtieth birthday on May 1. King Kong, Fay Wray, and various other local notables will start carousing on the observation deck at 11 A.M.

Readings—April 25 at 8: John Ashbery and Gerrit Henry read from their own poetry. (Vanderbilt Hall, New York University, 40 Washington Sq. S., at Macdougal St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ April 29 at 7: Michael Dorris and Louise Erdrich read from their new novel. (Brentano's, Fifth Ave. at 48th St. No tickets necessary.)

Talks—April 28 at 6: Stockard Channing talks about her career in the theatre. (Paul Recital Hall, Juilliard School, 144 W. 66th St. For tickets, call 877-1800, ext. 633.) . . . ¶ April 29 at 6: Jack Newfield, of the New York *Observer*, talks about "The State of the City." (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.

Memoranda—The Long Island Antiques and Decorative Arts Show will be held April 27-28, from 10 to 6, at the Planting Fields Arboretum, in Oyster Bay. For more information, call 1-516 562-4771. . . . ¶ On May Day, at 12:15, the artist Garland Farwell will transform ten lampposts near the World Trade Center into Maypoles, around which people will dance and play.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 23.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Poison" (directed by Todd Haynes).
Theatre 2: "The Comfort of Strangers" (†).
Theatre 3: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 4: "Requiem for Dominic" (Robert Dornhelm).
Theatre 5: Through April 25: (Separate admissions) "Iron & Silk" (Shirley Sun), with Mark Salzman; and "Ay Carmela!" (Carlos Saura, in Spanish), with Carmen Maura and Andrés Pajares. From April 26: "Drowning by Numbers" (Peter Greenaway).
Theatre 6: "Cyrano de Bergerac" (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, in French), with Gérard Depardieu.

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
April 22: Theatre closed.
April 23-25: (Separate admissions) "Maria's Story" (Monona Wali, in Spanish, with English voice-overs and subtitles); "The Color of Pomegranates" (1969, Sergei Paradjanov; in Georgian); and "Water and Power" (Pat O'Neill).
April 26-28: (Separate admissions) "Maria's Story"; "The Legend of Suram Fortress" (1985, Paradjanov and Dodo Adashidze; in Georgian); and "Water and Power."
April 29: Theatre closed.
From April 30: (Separate admissions) "Maria's Story"; "Ashik Kerib" (1988, Paradjanov; in Georgian); and "Water and Power."

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through April 25: "The Doors" (Oliver Stone), with Val Kilmer. From April 26: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astil and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 3: "Dances with Wolves" (Kevin Costner), with Costner, Mary McDonnell, Graham Greene, and Rodney E. Grant.

Cinema 12, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"The Vanishing" (†).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Killer" (James Woo, in Mandarin).
Theatre 3: "The Object of Beauty" (†).
Theatre 4: "The British Animation Invasion," twenty-five short films.
Theatre 5: "Mister Johnson" (†).
Theatre 6: "Forever Mary" (Marco Risi, in Italian).
Theatre 7: "The Grifters" (†).

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (Jonathan Demme), with Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins.
Theatre 2: Through April 25: "Dances with Wolves" (Kevin Costner), with Costner, Mary McDonnell, Graham Greene, and Rodney E. Grant. From April 26: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 3: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 4: "The Marrying Man" (†).
Theatre 5: "Alice" (Woody Allen), with Mia Farrow.
Theatre 6: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through April 25: "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (James Ivory), with Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward.
From April 26: "Oscar" (John Landis), with Sylvester Stallone.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Dances with Wolves" (Kevin Costner), with Costner, Mary McDonnell, Graham Greene, and Rodney E. Grant.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "The Field" (Jim Sheridan), with Richard Harris, John Hurt, Tom Berenger, and Brenda Fricker.
Theatre 2: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 3: 'The Object of Beauty" (†).
Theatre 4: "Class Action" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 3: "The Silence of the Lambs" (Jonathan Demme), with Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through April 25: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).
From April 26: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Reversal of Fortune" (Barbet Schroeder), with Glenn Close, Jeremy Irons, and Ron Silver.

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "The Marrying Man" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Grifters" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Sleeping with the Enemy" (Joseph Ruben), with Julia Roberts, Patrick Bergin, and Kevin Anderson.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Cyrano de Bergerac" (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, in French), with Gérard Depardieu.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "The Object of Beauty" (†).
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"The Five Heartbeats" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Class Action" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 25: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly. From April 26: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: Through April 25: "Defending Your Life" (†). From April 26: "Oscar" (John Landis), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 2: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).
Theatre 3: Through April 23: "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (James Ivory), with Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward. April 24-30: "A Woman Under the Influence" (†). From May 1: "The Killing of a Chinese Bookie" (1976, John Cassavetes), with Ben Gazzara.

Natasha Richardson in "The Comfort of Strangers"

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through April 25: "The Doors" (Oliver Stone), with Val Kilmer. From April 26: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.).
Theatre 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Impromptu" (James Lapine), with Judy Davis, Hugh Grant, Mandy Patinkin, Bernadette Peters, and Julian Sands.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (Jonathan Demme), with Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins.
Theatre 2: "Alice" (Woody Allen), with Mia Farrow.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Cross My Heart" (Jacques Fansten, in French).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Dances with Wolves" (Kevin Costner), with Costner, Mary McDonnell, Graham Greene, and Rodney E. Grant.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 2: Through April 25: "The Five Heartbeats" (†). From April 26: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 2: Through April 25: "The Marrying Man" (†). From April 26: "Oscar" (John Landis), with Sylvester Stallone.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through April 23: "Echoes of Conflict" (1989, directed by Jorge Johanan Weller; in Hebrew). From April 24: "Chameleon Street" (1989, Wendell B. Harris, Jr.).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (Jonathan Demme), with Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins.
Theatre 2: Through April 25: "The Five Heartbeats" (†). From April 26: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
Through April 25: "The Marrying Man" (†).
From April 26: "Oscar" (John Landis), with Sylvester Stallone.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Class Action" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Long Walk Home" (†).
Theatre 2: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).
Theatre 3: "GoodFellas" (Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Ray Liotta, and Joe Pesci.
Theatre 4: "Reversal of Fortune" (Barbet Schroeder), with Glenn Close, Jeremy Irons, and Ron Silver.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 3: "The Hard Way" (John Badham), with Michael J. Fox and James Woods.
Theatre 4: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (Joseph Ruben), with Julia Roberts.
Theatre 5: "Class Action" (†).
Theatre 6: Through April 25: "Warlock" (Steve Miner), with Julian Sands. From April 26: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.
Theatre 7: "The Grifters" (†).
Theatre 8: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.
Theatre 9: "The Object of Beauty" (†).

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).

Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

Theatre 3: "Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

Through April 25: "The Marrying Man" (†).

From April 26: "Oscar" (John Landis), with Sylvester Stallone.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "The Long Walk Home" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Hard Way" (John Badham), with Michael J. Fox and James Woods.

Theatre 3: "Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.

Theatre 4: "Class Action" (†).

Theatre 5: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.

Theatre 6: "Eminent Domain" (John Irvin), with Donald Sutherland and Anne Archer.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

Through April 25: "The Doors" (Oliver Stone), with Val Kilmer.

From April 26: "Spartacus" (1960, Stanley Kubrick), with Kirk Douglas.

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

Through April 25: "True Colors" (†).

From April 26: "Drowning by Numbers" (Peter Greenaway).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

Through April 25: "Mister Johnson" (†).

From April 26: "Journey of Hope" (Xavier Koller; in Turkish, Italian, and German, with English and French subtitles).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

Theatre 1: "La Femme Nikita" (†).

Theatre 2: "Iron & Silk" (Shirley Sun), with Mark Salzman.

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)

"Daddy Nostalgia" (Bertrand Tavernier, in English and French), with Dirk Bogarde and Jane Birkin.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Requiem for Dominic" (Robert Dornhelm).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"Defending Your Life" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)

Through April 25: "Class Action" (†).

From April 26: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "The Nasty Girl" (Michael Verhoeven, in German), with Lena Stolze.

Theatre 2: "Korczak" (Andrzej Wajda, in Polish).

Theatre 3: "Ju Dou" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

"The Object of Desire" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "Alice" (Woody Allen), with Mia Farrow.

Theatre 2: Through April 25: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal. From April 26: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.).

Theatre 3: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (†).

Theatre 4: "The Silence of the Lambs" (Jonathan Demme), with Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins.

Theatre 5: Through April 25: "The Marrying Man" (†). From April 26: "Oscar" (John Landis), with Sylvester Stallone.

Theatre 6: "Dances with Wolves" (Kevin Costner), with Costner, Mary McDonnell, Graham Greene, and Rodney E. Grant.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.

Theatre 2: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).

Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: Through April 25: "Up Against the Wall." From April 26: "Toy Soldiers" (directed by Daniel Petrie, Jr.).

Theatre 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.

Theatre 3: "If Looks Could Kill" (William Dear), with Richard Grieco.

Theatre 4: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).

Theatre 5: "GoodFellas" (Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Ray Liotta, and Joe Pesci.

Theatre 6: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (Joseph Ruben), with Julia Roberts.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"Dances with Wolves" (Kevin Costner), with Costner, Mary McDonnell, Graham Greene, and Rodney E. Grant.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (Jonathan Demme), with Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins.

Theatre 2: "The Perfect Weapon" (Mark DiSalle), with Jeffrey Speakman.

Theatre 3: "Ghost" (Jerry Zucker), with Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore, Whoopi Goldberg, and Tony Goldwyn.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.

Theatre 2: Through April 25: "Warlock" (Steve Miner), with Julian Sands. From April 26: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "New Jack City" (†).

Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

In many a film noir, the central figure is the femme fatale—the shady bombshell who detonates all the greed and lust that would otherwise lie dormant in the morally ambiguous hero. In the bracing and original 1949 movie "Caught" (playing at the Film Forum 2, on April 25), the director, Max Ophuls, reverses the dynamics. Barbara Bel Geddes is wrenchingly confused as the good-hearted but upwardly mobile young heroine—a department-store model and charm-school graduate—who makes the mistake of marrying a millionaire. Prince Charmless reduces everyone, including his wife, to a stooge or a trophy. Robert Ryan's magnate is the homme fatal. His craggy "masculine" strength is terrifying because it's divorced from love, tenderness, or mercy. James Mason is reliably fervid as the virtuous doctor who tries to save Bel Geddes, and Curt Bois skulks expertly as the villain's right-hand mouse—who roars, once. Ryan, though, is staggering: his whole rangy body is a physicalized snarl.

Just as potent is Burt Lancaster in the 1946 film expansion of Ernest Hemingway's short story "The Killers" (also at the Film Forum 2, but on April 30). Lancaster's début movie role is "the big Swede" who refuses to dodge fate. In the heart-chilling opening sequence (straight out of Hemingway), he stays in bed and waits for two thugs to execute him. Under Robert Siodmak's pinpoint direction, the cast uncovers every threat in Hemingway's tough-guy badinage. Screenwriters Anthony Veiller and (uncredited) John Huston work from Papa's clues to extrapolate the "back story" of why the Swede is murdered. It's a classic tale of dishonor among thieves, with Ava Gardner as the woman who loves and leaves Lancaster. Gardner is the most deceptive femme fatale imaginable—she kills him softly with her song.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

April 22: "Coup de Torchon" ("Clean Slate"; 1981, directed by Bertrand Tavernier; in French), with Philippe Noiret, Isabelle Huppert, Jean-Pierre Marielle, and Stéphane Audran; and "Le Boucher" (1969, Claude Chabrol; in French), with Audran and Jean Yanne.

April 23-24: "Elevator to the Gallows" (1957, Louis Malle; in French), with Jeanne Moreau and Maurice Ronet; and "The Soft Skin" (1964, François Truffaut; in French), with Jean Desailly.

April 25-27: "Choice of Arms" (1981, Alain Corneau; in French), with Yves Montand, Gérard Depardieu, and Catherine Deneuve; and "The Night Heaven Fell" (1958, Roger Vadim; in French), with Brigitte Bardot, Alida Valli, and Stephen Boyd.

April 28-30: "Lola" (1961, Jacques Demy; in French), with Anouk Aimée and Marc Michel; and "French Cancan" (1954, Jean Renoir; in French), with Jean Gabin, Maria Felix, and Edith Piaf.

From May 1: "Citizen Kane" (1941, Orson Welles), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, and Everett Sloane.

Cinema Village, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

Through April 23: "Vincent & Theo" (1990, Robert Altman), with Tim Roth and Paul Rhys.

April 24-27: "King of New York" (1990, Abel Ferrara), with Christopher Walken, David Caruso, Larry Fishburne, Victor Argo, and Wesley Snipes; and "The Krays" (1990, Peter Medak), with Billie Whitelaw, Gary Kemp, and Martin Kemp.

April 28-30: "Bagdad Café" (†); and "The Brother from Another Planet" (1984, John Sayles), with Joe Morton, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Sayles.

From May 1: "Stop Making Sense" (1984, Jonathan Demme), with Talking Heads; and "Mystery Train" (1990, Jim Jarmusch).

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

April 22: "The Last Laugh" (1924, F. W. Murnau; a German silent film), with Emil Jannings; and "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (1919, Robert Wiene; a German silent film), with Werner Krauss, Conrad Veidt, Lil Dagover, and Friedrich Feher.

April 23: "In Which We Serve" (1942, Noël Coward and David Lean), with Coward, Celia Johnson, John Mills, and Kay Walsh; and "Things to Come" (1936, William Cameron Menzies), with Raymond Massey and Ralph Richardson.

April 24: "The Bad and the Beautiful" (1952, Vincente Minnelli), with Lana Turner, Kirk Douglas, Dick Powell, and Gloria Grahame; and "Keeper of the Flame" (1943, George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, Spencer Tracy, Richard Whorf, Frank Craven, and Margaret Wycherly.

April 25: "Caught" (see blurb in center column); and "Ruthless" (1948, Edgar G. Ulmer), with Zachary Scott, Louis Hayward, Diana Lynn, and Sydney Greenstreet.

April 26: "Greed" (1924, Erich von Stroheim; silent), with Gibson Gowland, ZaSu Pitts, and Jean Hersholt; and "Mad Love" (†).

April 27: "Murder, My Sweet" (†); and "Mr. Arkadin" (1955, Orson Welles), with Welles, Michael Redgrave, Patricia Medina, and Akim Tamiroff.

April 28: "Stagecoach" (1939, John Ford), with Claire Trevor, John Wayne, John Carradine, Andy Devine, Thomas Mitchell, and George Bancroft; and "The Long Voyage Home" (1940, Ford), with Wayne and Mitchell.

April 29: "The Patsy" (1928, King Vidor; silent), with Marion Davies; and "After Office Hours" (1935, Robert Z. Leonard), with Clark Gable and Constance Bennett.

April 30: "The Killers" (see blurb in center column) and "Lady on a Train" (†).

From May 1: "Citizen Kane" (1941, Orson Welles), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, and Everett Sloane.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

April 22: "The Earrings of Madame de . . ." (1953, Max Ophuls; in French), with Charles Boyer, Danielle Darrieux, and

Vittorio De Sica; and "Le Plaisir" (1952, Ophuls; in French), with Darrieux, Simone Simon, Gaby Morlay, and Daniel Gélin.

April 23: "The Last Laugh" (1924, F. W. Murnau; a German silent film), with Emil Jannings; and "Spies" (1929, Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Rudolph Klein-Rogge.

April 24: "Family Plot" (1976, Alfred Hitchcock), with Karen Black, Bruce Dern, Barbara Harris, and William Devane; and "Marnie" (1964, Alfred Hitchcock), with Tippi Hedren, Sean Connery, Diane Baker, and Martin Gabel.

April 25: "Bunny Lake Is Missing" (1965, Otto Preminger), with Laurence Olivier, Carol Lynley, Keir Dullea, and Noël Coward; and "Anatomy of a Murder" (1959, Preminger), with James Stewart, Lee Remick, Ben Gazzara, Arthur O'Connell, and George C. Scott.

April 26-27: "Key Largo" (1948, John Huston), with Humphrey Bogart, Edward G. Robinson, and Lauren Bacall; and "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre" (1948, Huston), with Walter Huston, Bogart, Tim Holt, Alfonso Bedoya, and Robert Blake.

April 28: "Touch of Evil" (1958, Orson Welles), with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh; and "Shadow of a Doubt" (1942, Alfred Hitchcock), with Teresa Wright, Joseph Cotten, Patricia Collinge, Hume Cronyn, and Henry Travers.

April 29: "Osaka Elegy" (1936, Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese); and "Sisters of the Gion" (1936, Mizoguchi; in Japanese).

April 30: "The Last Picture Show" (1971, Peter Bogdanovich), with Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson, and Cloris Leachman; and "Nickelodeon" (1976, Bogdanovich), with Ryan O'Neal, Burt Reynolds, Tatum O'Neal, and Brian Keith.

May 1: "Dark Passage" (†); and "To Have and Have Not" (1944, Howard Hawks), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Walter Brennan.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—April 22 at 2:30: "The Love Child" (1987, directed by Robert Smith), with Shirley Hancock. . . . ¶ April 22 at 6: "Fellow Traveller" (1990, Philip Saville), with Ron Silver and Hart Bochner. . . . ¶ April 22 at 6:30: "Machete Gillette . . . Mama" (1989) and "Your Television Traveller" (1991), both films by Larry Gottheim, who will be present. . . . ¶ April 23 at 2:30: "Distant Voices, Still Lives" (1988, Terence Davies). . . . ¶ April 23 at 6: "The Love Child." . . . ¶ April 25 at 2:30: "The Quiet One" (1949, Janice Loeb, Sidney Meyers, Helen Levitt, and William Levitt), a documentary. . . . ¶ April 25 at 3 and 6: "Watsonville on Strike" (1989, Jon Silver). . . . ¶ April 25 at 6: "Native Land" (1942, Leo Hurwitz and Paul Strand), a documentary. . . . ¶ April 26 at 2: "Children of Paradise" (1945, Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault, Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, Louis Salou, Marcel Herrand, Pierre Renoir, and Maria Casarès. . . . ¶ April 26 at 3: "Three Fugitives" (1957, Nya' Abbas Acub; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ April 26 at 6: "In Which We Serve" (1942, Noël Coward and David Lean), with Coward, John Mills, and Bernard Miles. . . . ¶ April 26 at 6: "Woman of Courage" (1989, Eros Djarot; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ April 27 at 1: "Day of Wrath" (1943, Carl Dreyer; in Danish), with Lisbeth Movin and Anna Svierkier. . . . ¶ April 27 at 2:30: "Three Daughters" (1956, Usmar Ismail; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ April 27 at 4: "Children of Paradise." . . . ¶ April 27 at 5: "Naga Bonar" (1987, M. T. Risyaf; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ April 28 at 1: "The Best Years of Our Lives" (1946, William Wyler), with Fredric March, Myrna Loy, and Teresa Wright. . . . ¶ April 28 at 2:30: "Behind the Mosquito Net" (1982, Teguh Karya; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ April 28 at 5: "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948, Orson Welles), with Welles, Rita Hayworth, and Everett Sloane. . . . ¶ April 28 at 5: "After the Curfew" (1954, Usmar Ismail; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ April 29 at 2:30: "The Lady from Shanghai." . . . ¶ April 29 at 6 and April 30 at 2:30: "The Magnificent Ambersons" (1942, Orson Welles), with Tim Holt, Joseph Cotten, and Dolores Costello. . . . ¶ April 30 at 3: "After the Curfew." . . . ¶ April 30 at 6: "Citizen Kane" (1941, Orson Welles), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, and Everett Sloane. . . . ¶ April 30 at 6: "Three Fugitives."

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"The Art of Reality: Innovators of the Documentary." April 27 at 2: "Hearts and Minds" (1974, Peter Davis). . . . ¶ April 27 at 4:30: "Harlan County, U.S.A." (1976, Barbara Kopple). . . . ¶ April 28 at 1: "One Year in a Life of Crime" (1989, Jon Alpert, Maryann DeLeo, and Janet Storti). Mr. Alpert will be present. . . . ¶ April 28 at 2:30: "Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam" (1987, Bill Couturie). Mr. Couturie will be present. . . . ¶ April 28 at 4:30: "Rape: Cries from the Heartland" (1991, DeLeo).

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—April 24 at 8, April 25 at 10, April 26 at 6 and 10, April 27 at 10, and April 28 at 8 and 10: "Space Coast" (1979, Ross McElwee and Michel Negroponte). . . . ¶ April 24 at 9:30: A program of films by Douglass Crockwell and Maya Deren. . . . ¶ April 26-27 at 8: A program of films by Gary Goldberg. . . . ¶ April 27-28 at 1: Two different programs of dance on film. . . . ¶ April 27 at 7:30: Films by Nester Almendros and Roland Kruger. . . . ¶ April 27 at 9:15: Films by Tati Nugyen, Michael Schell, Nancy Seymour, Michael Snow, and Michael Wallin. . . . ¶ April 28 at 6: "La Belle et la Bête" (1946, Jean Cocteau; in French, with no English subtitles).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—April 26 at 6:30: "Bicycle Sighs" (1989, Shion Sono; in Japanese) and "Bus" (1987, Takashi Komatsu; in Japanese).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—April 23 at 6:15 and April 24 at 2: "Paris Is Burning" (†), "Video Is Television?" (1989, Antonio Muntadas), and "They Are Lost to Vision Altogether" (1989, Tom Kalin). . . . ¶ April 25-26 at 2: "the long weekend" (1989, Gregg Araki). . . . ¶ April 27-28 at 2: "The Machine That Killed Bad People" (1990, Steve Fagin). . . . ¶ April 30 at 6:15 and May 1 at 2: "The Man in the Mirror" (1990, Aimee Morgana) and "History and Memory" (1991, Rae Tajiri).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—May 1 at 12:30, 3:30, 6, and 8:45: "Henry & June" (1990, Philip Kaufman), with Fred Ward, Uma Thurman, and Maria de Medeiros.

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway. (638-5000)—"William Greaves: Chronicler of the African-American Experience." April 27 at 7:30: "Black Power in America: Myth or Reality?" (1987) and "The Deep North" (1988). . . . ¶ April 28 at 2: "New York City Transit Union" (1970, Philip Burton, Jr.) and "In the Company of Men" (1969).

Captain's Ed Sullivan Theatre, 1697 Broadway, at 53rd St.—April 23-27 at 7: A high-definition video presentation of Prokofiev's opera "War and Peace," as staged last summer by Francesca Zambello for the Seattle Opera. Featuring a cast of two hundred and fifty, including soprano Sheri Greenawald and tenor Vladimir Chernov, conducted by Mark Ermler. Opening on the hundredth anniversary of the composer's birth. (Tickets at the door on the nights of the screenings.) . . . **NOTE:** Ms. Zambello will be joined by various Prokofiev authorities in a symposium at the theatre on April 27, from noon until 6:30, which includes a screening of the video. For symposium information, call 307-4388.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Bagdad Café (1988)—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks in to a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. In this remote setting she finds herself, or something, and also changes the lives of the staff and residents of the shabby oasis. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon, is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable: the irascible black woman (CCH Pounder) who runs the motel and café; her wild teen-age daughter (Monica Calhoun) and sensitive, piano-playing son (Darron Flagg); a retired Hollywood set painter (Jack Palance), who dresses like a demented cowboy; a sultry tattoo artist (Christine Kaufman); and so on. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings all these outcast characters, including herself, together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty. Adlon's skewed camera angles and his use of colored filters seem arty and arbitrary, and the American performers look a little desperate. They're trapped in a movie that treats them as merely exotic—waxwork grotesques waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay.—T.R. (Cinema Village; April 28-30.)

Class Action—In this high-concept legal thriller, directed by Michael Apted, Gene Hackman plays a flamboyant lawyer who specializes in civil-liberties and consumer-advocacy cases, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio plays his daughter, an ambitious associate in a slick corporate-law firm. The script—by Carolyn Shelby, Christopher Ames, and Samantha Shad—contrives to pit the father and the daughter against each other in a negligence suit against an auto manufacturer. Sparks, both personal and professional, are meant to fly, but the Hollywood engineers who designed this piece of product have cut a few too many corners: the thriller plotting is predictable, the family drama is broad and sentimental, and the connections between them are facile. Yet Hackman and Mastrantonio somehow manage to impart lifelike rhythms to their scenes together: their skill keeps this rickety contraption from stalling completely.—T.R. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Baronet, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinema, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ 62nd & Broadway; through April 25.)

The Comfort of Strangers—Harold Pinter's screenplay, adapted from a novel by Ian McEwan, is a kinky contemporary variation on the sort of plot that made Victorian readers shiver—the story of innocents lured into the clutches of charming villains. The innocents here are an unmarried English couple (Natasha Richardson and Rupert Everett) vacationing in Venice; the evil seducers are a husband and wife (Christopher Walken and Helen Mirren) whose tastes run to voyeurism and sadomasochism; the dread lair in which the monsters toy with their prey is a huge, ornately furnished apartment with a spectacular view of the city. The director, Paul Schrader, dresses his characters in Armani and sets the camera in motion to swirl gracefully around them, picking up miragelike shimmers from the canals and beautiful but ominous architectural details; the languorous camera movements create an authentically gothic sense of catastrophe just around the corner. Walken glides effortlessly through his role as the embodiment of Old World evil. He gives the character a lordly, sinister air, and suggests, as well, that he's wearing something really odd underneath his superbly tailored white suits. And Richardson is characteristically amazing: she brings a touch of humanity to this rather formal party. The movie improves on the novel by jettisoning its dubious psychology and its pretensions to literary significance. Schrader treats the story as an elegant horror-movie game, a trick done with mirrors, and he carries it off. Dante Spinotti's cinematography and Gianni Quaranta's production design contribute to the luxurious, decadent atmosphere. Music by Angelo Badalamenti. —T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/8/91.) (Angelika Film Center.)

Dark Passage (1947)—"Dark" in a movie title generally seems to be an attempt to give some sinister allure to opacity and confusion, as in "The Dark Corner," "Dark Waters," "The Dark Mirror." And this Bogart-Bacall bummer is no exception. Throughout most of this miserably plotted picture, Bogart, accused of murder, hides out in Bacall's fashionable San Francisco apartment while recovering from plastic surgery; with his head bandaged, he can't do much except nod appreciatively while Bacall feeds him through a glass straw. In moments of stress, she dilates her nostrils; he's so trussed up he can't even do that. The picture is an almost total drag, though Agnes Moorehead, as the villainess, has a sensational exit through plate-glass windows. Written and directed by Delmer Davies, from a David Goodis story.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 1.)

Defending Your Life—The setting of Albert Brooks' disappointing new comedy is a place called Judgment City, which, according to this picture, is where people from Southern California go after death. Here recently completed lives are examined and evaluated, in a formal proceeding something like a trial: if the defendant wins the case, he moves up the cosmic ladder to a higher form of consciousness. The hero, Daniel Miller (Brooks), a yuppie adman who met his untimely end in a brand-new BMW, naturally believes in upward mobility; in death, as in life, he wants to impress the higher-ups and get that promotion. Although this sounds like an ideal setup for Brooks' kind of comedy, the film is mild-mannered and blandly whimsical, and its rhythms are sluggish. The humor doesn't have any satiric edge, because the character Brooks has written for himself isn't the egotistical, grotesquely needy baby boomer he played in his three previous movies. Daniel Miller is less an eager beaver than a cute, scurrying mouse: the case against him is that he lacked the drive to make the most of his opportunities on earth. You don't want to believe that the picture is really saying what it appears to be saying: that Daniel's lack of aggressiveness represents a poignant, tragic failure of self-actualization. Brooks is celebrating qualities he used to satirize, and there's something smarmy about his attempt to turn himself into a lovable schlemiel—to cast a warmer, more flattering light on the self that his other pictures mercilessly exposed. Also with Meryl Streep, Lee Grant, and, as the hero's lawyer, Rip Torn, who periodically energizes the movie with some lunatic courtroom theatricality.—T.R. (4/22/91) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through April 25.)

La Femme Nikita—The end of French cinema as we know it. Written and directed by Luc Besson. With Anne Parillaud, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tcheky Karyo, and (in a cameo) Jeanne Moreau. In French.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

The Five Heartbeats—There isn't a good scene per Heartbeat in this rags-to-sequins story of a Temptations-like five-man singing group. The sweet temper and eager-to-please showmanship of director-star Robert Townsend (who co-wrote the script with Keenen Ivory Wayans) can't compensate for his amateur filmmaking. The early sequences of the quintet's formation have some vaudevillian humor and unzipped energy, but then Townsend crams too much in: racism, "crossover" pressures, drugs, criminality, sexual and professional competition, and, yes, religious redemption. None of the Heartbeats (Townsend, Michael Wright, Leon, Harry J. Lennix, Tico Wells, and, later, John Canada Terrell) score the way Lonette McKee did in the girl-group movie "Sparkle." The only singer who *does*—Tressa Thomas, who plays Townsend's baby sister—performs once and is never heard from again. She tears through a number called "We Haven't Finished Yet." Townsend should have taken that cue: his movie is painfully unfinished.—M.S. (59th Street East Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Waverly; through April 25.)

The Grifters—This adaptation of one of the punchier pulp novels by Jim Thompson retains Thompson's hardboiled pitilessness. It's about three scam artists: tough, seductive Lilly (Anjelica Huston); her son, Roy (John

At Film Forum 2, Marion Davies and Lawrence Gray on the set of "The Patsy"

Cusack), who won't have anything to do with her; and his bubbly bedmate, Myra (Annette Bening), a sex fantasy come to luscious life. These chiselers never got a break and don't give anybody else a break. The director, Stephen Frears, and the scriptwriter, Donald E. Westlake, are smart enough not to attempt to make a big thing out of this L.A. film noir. They keep it snappy, and heighten the sexual electricity. And they smack us with discord; we're watching a form of cabaret. Huston is astounding—you can see why the son is getting even with her by throwing his life away—and Bening's two-faced little-girl quality is just what film noir thrives on. (This is a picture with two competing femmes fatales.) It's thin stuff, but it's pretty terrific. (It even has great opening titles.) With Pat Hingle giving the performance of his life.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Village East Cinemas, Sutton, and Chelsea Cinemas.)

Guilty by Suspicion—Can a mannequin acquire political consciousness? That's the only question raised by this flaccid anti-HUAC morality play. To judge from Robert De Niro's hollow impersonation of a blacklisted director, the answer is no. Irwin Winkler, the veteran producer who here makes his directing début, has designed De Niro's hero as a good-hearted liberal (circa 1951) who just wants to keep making movies without naming names. Winkler and De Niro hope to forge a magnet for sympathy and instead construct a vacuum. The politics get sucked right in. Only peripheral figures turn out to be lapsed or unrepentant Communists, or even steady sympathizers. The victims include a Joseph Losey-like director (played with amusing snap by Martin Scorsese) and a Dorothy Comingore-like actress (Patricia Wettig, in a stupefying histrionic exhibition). How virtuous is this movie? Annette Bening plays De Niro's ex-wife—a schoolteacher. Because of the blacklist, they kiss and make up. The script is credited to Winkler.—M.S. (Loews 19th Street East 6, Cinema II, Quad Cinema, and Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ 34th St. East; through April 25.)

Ju Dou—It's been compared to James M. Cain, but the postman barely rings once in this tale of adultery Chinese style. In a small mountain village in the twenties, an important dye-mill owner (Li Wei), crazed over his lack of an heir, tortures his beautiful young bride (Gong Li). She seeks comfort in the arms of his worker nephew (Li Bao-Tian). There's no compelling plot, only the grinding inevitability of fate and tradition. The director, Zhang Yimou, simply metes out punishment to the lovers, the tyrant—and the audience. The lovers' son does most of the damage. He has the lethal power of the Children of the Damned—unfortunately, without the gimmicky zest of their eerie, glowing eyeballs. Zhang started out as a painter and still photographer. He remains one, devoting more attention to the dye mill's set design than to the story or the characters. The bolts of fabric are colored in subtle, vivid hues; the people are made out of whole cloth. In Mandarin.—M.S. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Lady on a Train (1945)—Ugh. A murder mystery that starts from a Leslie Charteris story but never gets anyplace you'd want to go to. Made in the period when the former child star Deanna Durbin was turning into a fairly substantial young matron, the film casts her as a girl who witnesses a murder from a train that is nearing Grand Central and who becomes involved with the friends and relatives of the victim, as well as with a mystery-story writer. (Has that gimmick ever worked?) The film betrays an obvious uncertainty about how the public wants to see its Deanna. One minute she is just a little girl in pigtails lost in a great big raincoat, and the next minute she is a many-curved siren crooning "Give Me a Little Kiss, Will You, Huh?" in a strange, guttural manner evidently intended to suggest that passion has got a stranglehold on her. The cameraman photographs her from so many angles that at any particular moment it's hard to know whether she's standing up or lying down. Charles David directed; with Ralph Bellamy, Edward Everett Horton, George Coulouris, Dan Duryea, David Bruce, Allen Jenkins, and Patricia Morison. The script is by Edmund Beloin and Robert O'Brien.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; April 30.)

The Long Walk Home—Sisterhood—and liberalism—are powerful once again in this soul-stirring civil-rights drama. A bit too programmatic for the big screen, it would have been a landmark TV movie. But the cast overcomes. Sissy Spacek plays a proper Southern matron with an independent streak, and Whoopi Goldberg is the housemaid who inspires her to become a car-pool driver during the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955-56. Goldberg has never been better. In a part calling for restraint and constant wariness, she has all-seeing eyes. She summons an embattled dignity that gathers tremendous cumulative force. Spacek is appropriately smug as well as sharply empathic; for a role of this type, she's unusually unsentimental. Working from a script by John Cork (a Montgomery native), under the direction of Richard Pearce, these actresses embody the old integrationist dream: they descry each other's positions and seize a common ground. The movie is designed to be "inspirational," but it respects your intelligence. The climax is rousing, not rabble-rousing.—M.S. (Quad Cinema, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

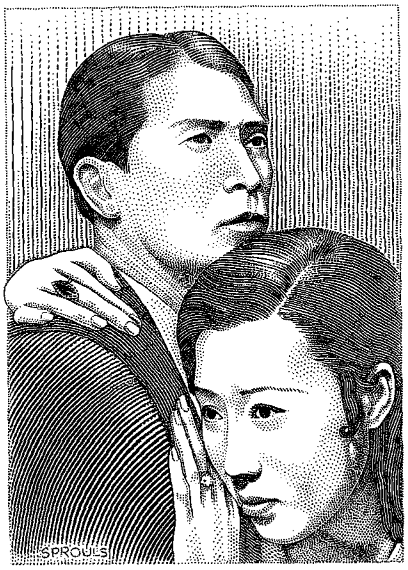
Mad Love (1935)—Karl Freund, the famous UFA cinematographer, directed this version of the horror story "The Hands of Orlac" for M-G-M, starring Peter Lorre, with Gregg Toland (who was later to shoot "Citizen Kane") in the camera crew. Freund's direction is disappointingly static, but the film has a distinctive Grand Guignol style and it's of considerable visual and historical interest. Peter Lorre's mad doctor (who grafts the hands of a knife-wielding murderer onto the sensitive pianist, Orlac, played by Colin Clive) might almost be an early sketch for Orson Welles' performance as the elderly Kane; the gothic sets of the two pictures have many similarities, and a white cockatoo turns up in both of them. Guy Endore, John L. Balderston, and P. J. Wolfson adapted the Maurice Renard novel, which Robert Wiene filmed as a silent in Germany, with Conrad Veidt as Orlac.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; April 26.)

The Marrying Man—Vicki Anderson, Bugsy Siegel's favorite saloon singer, is devastatingly attractive to Charley Pearl, the toothpaste heir. It's lust at first sight; by the fourth time he marries her, it turns into love. For the farce to work, the audience would have to share Charley's funny feeling. But Kim Basinger, as Vicki, is the only one who does. She gives a self-adoring, cartoonish performance. Basinger's vocalizing is passable, but her onstage moves (choreographed by Jeffrey Hornaday) are as embarrassingly bald as Madonna's on a bad night (say, Oscar night). Alec Baldwin impersonates a dashing leading man without convincing anyone that Charley is having a good time. What's left of Neil Simon's script plays like a first—or two-hundred-and-first—draft; it takes nearly half the movie for Charley to choose Vicki rather than good girl Adele (Elisabeth Shue), the daughter of movie mogul Lew Horner (Robert Loggia). Paul Reiser, Fisher Stevens, Peter Dobson, and Steve Hytner, as Charley's show-biz and sporting buddies, are put in the squirrelly position of being the comic relief in a comedy. They're not a relief; they're just additional pests. Jerry Rees directed.—M.S. (Loews 19th Street East 6, and Sutton. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin, 8th St. Playhouse, Guild, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through April 25.)

Mister Johnson—An adaptation, directed by Bruce Beresford, of a 1939 Joyce Cary novel about a young Nigerian who works for British colonists in a remote rural outpost. The title character (played by Maynard Eziashi) is an outsized, broadly conceived comic invention—a man who seems to identify more strongly with his employers than with his countrymen. He composes grandiose songs of praise to "England, my home" (he's never been there), and he serves the stolid, pipe-smoking colonial district officer with ferocious enthusiasm. For Johnson, the ways of the white man's civilization are the elements of a romance, an epic song full of color and grand adventure: he looks at the world through the eyes of a poet, and transforms all he sees. The subject of the novel isn't the conflict between the culture of West Africa and that of the imperialist occupiers; it's the contrast between the wild fertility of an artist's imagination and the barrenness of his actual circumstances. The movie is skillful, handsome, and consistently enjoyable, but its studied style makes Cary's story seem a far more conventional colonial satire than it really is. For the most part Beresford directs like an intelligent man who just isn't quite getting the point. Eziashi, however, is a splendid Johnson: the movie's few surviving traces of the novel's complex wit are all contained in fleeting expressions on the actor's broad, smiling face. Also with Pierce Brosnan, Edward Woodward, Femi Fatoba, Beatie Edney, Bela Enahoro, Nick Reding, and Kwabena Manso. Screenplay by William Boyd; cinematography by Peter James.—T.R. (Village East Cinemas. . . . ¶ 57th St. Playhouse; through April 25.)

Murder, My Sweet (1945)—Philip Marlowe (Dick Powell) is employed by Moose Malloy (Mike Mazurki), a murderous, cretinous giant, to find the sweetheart he lost while doing a stretch in the jug; two beautiful women (Claire Trevor and Anne Shirley) periodically embrace Marlowe—a not especially perceptive detective—for the purpose of pulling his own gun on him. There was a time when Raymond Chandler regarded this movie, based on his "Farewell, My Lovely," as the most successful film adaptation of his novels, and thought that Dick Powell came closest to his conception of Marlowe. The author's judgment seems shaky: the movie is energetic enough, but its crumminess can't all be explained by fidelity to the material. Edward Dmytryk directed, in the brutal, fast style popular in the war years; the screenplay is by John Paxton. With Esther Howard, Otto Kruger, Miles Mander, and Ralf Harolde.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; April 27.)

New Jack City—A Saturday night not-so-special, with juicy bits and pieces. Mario Van Peebles' primitive but energetic anti-drug melodrama stars Wesley Snipes as a self-made crack king, Ice-T and Judd Nelson as the cops who try to bring him down, and Van Peebles himself as their boss, modestly named Stone. The screenwriters, Thomas Lee Wright and Barry Michael Cooper, portray Snipes' charismatic villain as a brutal ghetto cousin of the eighties white-collar criminals. He believes that a man must "rob to get rich in the Reagan era." He also must extort and murder. In the most jolting sequence, he turns an entire building into a crack apartment house. The narrative is a hash. With its combination of alienation and derring-do, "New Jack City" is like *Melvin* Van Peebles' "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song" and Brian De Palma's "Scarface" (it contains clips from both) crossed with "Serpico" and earnest TV cops-and-robbers series. When the drug lord's romantic problems come to the fore, you wonder if you missed an episode. As a whole, the movie resembles sixties biker movies as well as seventies blaxploitation films: the camera keeps riding the action, and the cast is loose and entertaining. Snipes, in particular, both acts up a storm and stays calm at the center of it. His character injects a touch of scuzzball baroque: the odd ridge of his hair style emerges from the fury of his brain waves.—M.S. (Manhattan Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and West Side Cinema.)



At Theatre 80 St. Marks, Kensaku Hara and Isuzu Yamada in "Osaka Elegy"

The Object of Beauty—Jake (John Malkovich) and Tina (Andie MacDowell) are a glamorous American couple camping out in a suite in a swank London hotel. They're unable to settle their account, which when the movie begins stands at about six thousand pounds, because Jake, a speculator, has blown all his money on a bad investment. Jake and Tina are unmarried and have no permanent address; they're charming, attractive drifters, getting by on style. In a sense, they're throwbacks to the sophisticated and slightly disreputable couples who floated airily through thirties romantic comedies: no-strings types who stick together for the best shallow reasons—for sex and laughs and the shared kick of living the high life without having to work too hard. The picture, written and directed by Michael Lindsay-Hogg, is conceived as high-style fluff, but it never delivers quite as much irresponsible fun as it promises. It's like a Lubitsch movie without the speed and the grace and the blissful inconsequentiality. Malkovich, however, is as unaccountably magnetic here as he was in "Dangerous Liaisons." His performance is a postmodern mutation of thirties style, an ungodly hybrid of William Powell and Boris Karloff, and it's sensationally funny. This is as original a piece of acting as you'll ever see in a romantic comedy. The supporting players are an unusually lively group: Lolita Davidovich, Peter Riegert, Joss Ackland, and Bill Paterson.—T.R. (4/22/91) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Regency.)

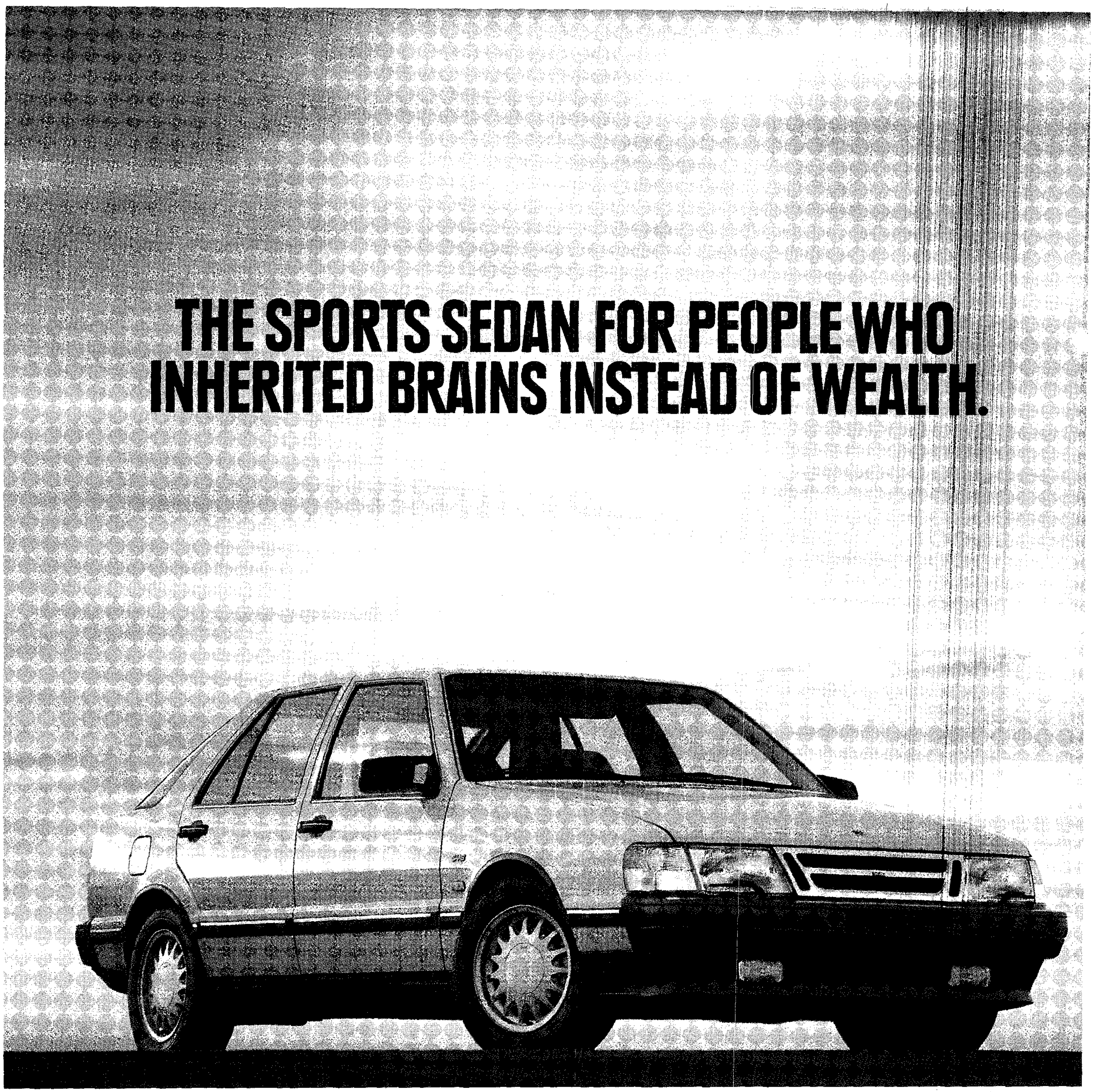
Paris Is Burning—Jennie Livingston's documentary about gay black and Latino men who compete in drag balls is a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory. The drag queens we see here seem to be holding up a mirror to the world of the empowered as they see it in movies, TV shows, and magazines. In the ballrooms, some present themselves as elegant, glamorous women in designer outfits, and walk with the hip-swinging slouch of runway models, while others adopt more mundane personas: college students (of both sexes); military men; Wall Street businessmen; aristocrats at play, dressed for yachting or riding to hounds. The criteria by which all these turns are judged is verisimilitude—"realness." The material is almost too rich, too suggestive. Everything about the ball culture signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that the movie induces a kind of semiotic daze. Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings, perhaps because she realizes that the way the drag performers manipulate image and fetishes and the iconography of popular culture is for many of them a sophisticated form of humor. The most self-aware of the gay men in this picture revel in the ironies of their social and sexual identities, and Livingston makes us appreciate the comic grace and the strange wisdom of that approach. Like all the best documentary filmmakers, she does her subjects the honor of allowing them to retain some of their mystery.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Film Forum. . . . ¶ Whitney Museum; April 23-24.)

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze—The bloom is off the shell. The plot hinges on the mystery of the chemical muck that transformed four tiny terrapins into budding superheroes. Michaelangelo, Raphael, Donatello, and Leonardo are disappointed to learn that their "secret origin" is a simple industrial mishap. Everyone else should be, too. This overly slick sequel has a funny credits sequence portraying Manhattan as a movable pizza feast; later on, a double-talking scientist (David Warner) creates a couple of gaga ooze mutants (more good work from Jim Henson's Creature Shop) who goose up the action. But the director, Michael Pressman, and the writer, Todd W. Langen, can't think of any better climax than having the turtles and the new critters duke it out on a dance floor. Splinter (the noble super-rat) and Shredder (the Darth Vader-like villain) are back, along with a barrage of puns and oddball exclamations. The artful grunge is gone—and so's the edge. The whole movie is bright yet colorless. Worst addition: a karate kid (Ernie Reyes, Jr.). Most annoying substitutions: Paige Turco for Judith Hoag and (as featured rap star) Vanilla Ice for M. C. Hammer.—M.S. (U. A. East, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

True Colors—This lame duck of a movie pretends to be a sardonic melodrama about overweening ambition in the Reagan era, with John Cusack as a corrupt political go-getter and James Spader as his idealistic best friend, a lawyer for the Justice Department. It's actually a rallying cry for the Wasp élite. Cusack is an underprivileged ethnic type who tries to pass for a preppy; even after he's exposed, he succeeds at ingratiating himself with all the genuine blue bloods in Spader's circle (including Spader's lover, Imogen Stubbs, and her senator father, Richard Widmark). They're all too trusting—they can't believe just how bad Cusack is until he blackmails or betrays them. In effect, it's a reactionary movie: Cusack, the grabber, spouts populist cant, while Widmark, whose parties are "*The National Review* come to life," emerges as an honorable man. It would all be offensive if it weren't so shallow. The true color of this film is lily white. Herbert Ross directed, from a script by Kevin Wade.—M.S. (Loews Festival; through April 25.)

The Vanishing—George Sluizer's film has a simple, powerful thriller hook: a young Dutch woman, Saskia (the radiant Johanna Ter Steege), vacationing in the South of France with her boyfriend, Rex (Gene Bervoets), walks into a highway rest stop to buy a soda and beer and never comes back. Rex's search for Saskia, which takes place over several years, produces suspense of an unusually melancholy kind. This fiendishly intelligent little movie is adapted from a novel called "The Golden Egg," by the Dutch writer Tim Krabbé (who collaborated with Sluizer on the adaptation), and its form is essentially literary. It's a sophisticated example of the sort of hermetic intellectual mysteries that Borges is famous for: the fates of Saskia and Rex are worked out with an almost geometric precision. But the movie's rigor isn't alienating, and its symmetries are evocative rather than merely clever. The film is about ordinary lives interrupted, hijacked out of time, and Sluizer, with documentary-style attentiveness to detail, does justice to the varied beauty of ordinariness. The narrative is constructed with flawless elegance, but the movie is far less self-contained than it seems: traces of deep feeling keep escaping from the artifice, like puffs of breath into cold, thin air. Not many thrillers have the sort of suggestiveness this picture has. It's a small classic. Bernard-Pierre Donnadieu gives a chilling performance as the perverse, enigmatic villain. In Dutch and French.—T.R. (1/28/91) (Cinema 12.)

A Woman Under the Influence (1974)—The writer-director, John Cassavetes, presents his morose yet romantic view of mental disorder, with Gena Rowlands as the helpless victim of a bullying blue-collar husband (Peter Falk) and a repressive society. She's a frantic, wilted Los Angeles housewife who is endowed with a clarity of vision that the warped society can't tolerate, and so she's persecuted. The scenes are often unshaped, and so rudderless that the meanings don't emerge. Rowlands externalizes schizophrenic dissolution; she fragments before our eyes. But her prodigious performance is enough for half a dozen tours de force—it's exhausting. With Katherine Cassavetes.—P.K. (Cinema 3rd Avenue; April 24-30.)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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

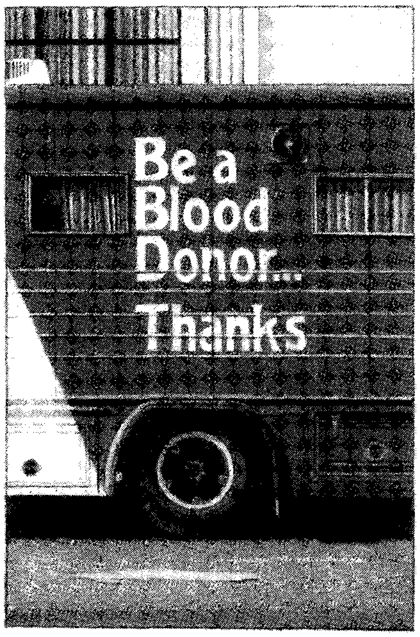
Notes and Comment

THE *Times* last month devoted a front-page story to a police drug raid at the University of Virginia. The haul from the raid was modest—twelve small sandwich bags of marijuana, three bags of psilocybin mushrooms, a few tablets of LSD, some water pipes, twelve students arrested—but the raid itself was a major operation; and the cause, to judge from the abundant press coverage, was widely perceived to be just. In a follow-up story in the *Times*, it was reported that the Charlottesville police chief, who originated the raid, felt "a pang of sorrow" as it began. The story went on, "He was sitting in darkness in his unmarked cruiser, watching 40 Federal, state and local officers move in on three fraternity houses, and he remembers thinking that several young lives were about to be ruined. . . . But the pang quickly passed."

Acting under a recent federal law that allows premises where drug dealing has occurred to be seized and sold, the police took possession of the raided fraternity houses, which were said to be worth a million dollars. Their sale, if it occurs, will produce a windfall for the local police department which its chief predicts will be "awesome." And for prosecutors and politicians the profits to be reaped from such raids are more than financial. The United States Attorney for the Western District of Virginia called a press conference after the raid and, echoing the Bush Administration's rhetoric on the subject, declared, "There are no safe havens, no safe places to conduct illegal drug trafficking." Virginia's governor, L. Douglas Wilder, expressed himself in nearly the same words; the raid, he said, "clearly shows that in Virginia there are no havens for drug users."

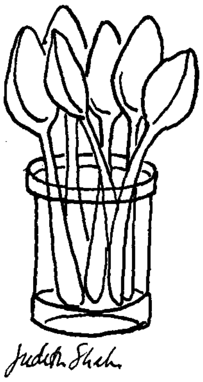
Governor Wilder, a Democrat, who is thinking of running for President next year, also raised the possibility of mandatory drug testing of Virginia's college students. This suggestion, by surpassing what had been considered the limits of polite discussion—by proposing, in effect, that the invasion of privacy in the name of stopping drug use be carried to dramatic new heights—gained the Governor a great deal of something that his Presidential aspirations require: national press. As for complaints made by the fathers of two of the students arrested that the university had been unfairly singled out, Governor Wilder angrily denounced them as "abhorrent."

Certainly the twelve students arrested at the University of Virginia were being made examples of. No one claimed that the raided fraternities were major drug-distribution centers. And, sad to say, a comparable haul of recreational drugs could probably be taken from most American college dormitories. What is unusual—or, at least, startling—is the punishments that the students face. Together, the most serious of the crimes they are charged with carry sentences of up to a hundred and thirty years in prison without the possibility of parole and fines of up to six and a half million dollars. The point of this thunderous lesson was driven home by Governor Wilder, who explained that "the vast majority of Virginians are not going to be in favor of coddling" student drug use.



Most of the current anti-drug offensive is being fought in our inner cities, in poor black and Latino communities. And the police and the press have often been guilty of portraying the drug trade as primarily a black and Latino business, despite evidence that white Americans are heavily involved in it at every level. Raiding élite college fraternities may turn up more headlines than drugs, but it provides political cover for officials faced with defending their war on drugs against charges of racism. The police chief who conceived the raid at the University of Virginia cited such charges as a main source of his inspiration. And the poor black residents of nearby neighborhoods were reported to be less than outraged that the students were finally getting some of what they themselves had been getting from the police for years. But extending the storm-trooper tactics being used in the ghetto to other parts of town is a degraded form of the idea of equal treatment before the law. This military approach to the drug problem brutalizes everyone it touches.

In his book "The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control," Dr. David F. Musto, of Yale Medical School, traces alternating cycles of public tolerance and intolerance of drugs and alcohol in American history. The last great wave of intolerance, which Dr. Musto believes ran from about the beginning of this century to about 1965, produced, among other excesses, Prohibition. The most recent cycle of tolerance peaked in the mid-seventies, he says, around the time President Carter told Congress, "Penalties against possession of a drug should not be more damaging to an individual than the use of the drug itself." By 1978, according to Dr. Musto, the current cycle of intolerance had begun. Periods of intolerance typically feature politicians catering to public fears by exaggerating the public-health threat presented by certain drugs, and proposing drastic penalties for any and all offenses. The last cycle of intolerance produced in one of its final spasms the death penalty for the sale of heroin to minors. The present tide of intolerance has already revived the death penalty for certain drug-related offenses, and it is unlikely that this tide has yet reached its high-water mark.



But the assault on civil liberties which anti-drug and anti-alcohol campaigns invariably entail is not just a matter of arbitrary crime and excessive punishment. There is also a characteristic pollution of the intellectual and political environment, a hysterical distortion of legal and civil norms. The raided fraternities were ordered by the university administration, on pain of suspension, to submit proof that their many members who were not arrested were *not* using or dealing in drugs. For the students affected, this order will presumably serve both as a philosophy problem and as one further lesson in contemporary politics.

* * *

Documented

ONE day last summer, while we were still in our old offices, a group of curators from the Smithsonian Institution came to town for a tour of the ancient beige hallways and convinced themselves that there was something culturally meaningful about the monastic shabbiness of the place. "Like rabbit warrens" and "like a historical document waiting to be documented" were a couple of the phrases they used. And Carlene Stephens, a curator in the Smithsonian's Division of Engineering and Industry who moonlights as a diplomat, said, "What struck me was the difference between the appearance of the offices and the appearance of the final product, *The New Yorker*."

The Smithsonian people took a look at virtually every writer's and every artist's work cubicle, saw enough untidiness to appall a stadiumful of mothers, and concluded that, for the sake of scholarship, some of it must be preserved. When they finally decided to gather up and transport to Washington artifacts from the office of a writer whom we'll call Trillin, those of us who had spent decades working in quarters that we confidently felt were even more squalid were, of course, disappointed. On the other hand, none of us had a piece of office furniture as decrepit as Trillin's blue-corduroy-slipcovered daybed. A few days before the movers arrived, we sat in Trillin's office—as far away from the daybed as possible—and asked him how he felt.

"Vindicated," he said. "Totally vindicated. I was told that I could give away to the Smithsonian what I wanted and keep what I wanted. The first thing they said they wanted was that daybed. The daybed was left here by some people who moved to California and needed a place to store it. That was sometime in the mid-sixties. Their names were Clive and Sophia Miller. Her maiden name was Dmitri, but it sounded as if it had an 'h' in it. She was Albanian—the only Albanian I knew. The daybed was not in perfect shape when I got it. I would like to emphasize that that is the original slipcover. I would gladly sign an affidavit that it has never been cleaned. Over the years, I'd been meaning to have the slipcover cleaned but I never quite got around to it. My wife would occasionally stop by the office, and she would look at the daybed and say, 'It's mortifying to know the person who has that piece of furniture in his office.' So, naturally, you can imagine how I felt when I asked her 'Where do you think that daybed is going?' and she said 'Out on the street with the garbage?' and I said 'No! To the Smithsonian Institution.' You might say I felt totally vindicated."

We also had a conversation the other day with Lonnie Bunch, the supervising curator of the Smithsonian's Division of Community Life. "There's a notion that a daybed implies the life of a writer, that writing is not a nine-to-five process, that there are times when you're going to need to sleep in your office," said Mr. Bunch, who has some advanced degrees. "We were also interested in some of the things you'd expect: Trillin's desk, a small old typewriter and typing table, the air-conditioner. He had a shelf filled with book-mailing envelopes in which he kept notes for articles he'd written. We wanted some of those book-mailing envelopes but not all of them. So we decided to collect certain artifacts, and we carefully documented everything photographically. We measured every object that we planned to take to Washington as well as objects that we wouldn't take, and we photographed them. Also extremely important are the kinds of posters, messages, cartoons, and other things on Trillin's walls and bulletin board. That stuff is crucially important, because that's what gives life and context to a desk and a daybed. If we took the daybed and put it on a pedestal and just called it 'Daybed, So-and-So Trillin, *The New Yorker*, 1991,' we would lose some of the context. But if you take the linoleum—maybe not the entire floor, but samples of the linoleum—and the cartoons and notes on the wall, and the exact dimensions, you end up with a complete tableau instead of an isolated artifact."

It happened that Trillin had attached quite a few interesting artifacts to his walls, some of which he wasn't prepared to hand over to the Smithsonian. Pinned to the bulletin board, for instance, were a photograph of Henri LaMothe, whom Trillin saw dive forty feet into seventeen inches of water in San Antonio in 1968; a photograph from the 1964 Mardi Gras, showing Trillin posing with the King of the Zulu Social Aid & Pleasure Club; a phone message he received when he was planning a trip to Europe, informing him that someone named Ali Talia had called; a 1978 calendar from *Low Rider Magazine;* an official membership card, signed by Lester Maddox, then the governor of Georgia, certifying his appointment to the Governor's Council on Alcohol, Tobacco, and Health; and several photographs of his wife and daughters. "The Smithsonian people sort of started with the couch and then wormed their way into my confidence," Trillin said. "I don't know exactly what the Smithsonian is getting, because I haven't cleaned this place up yet, but if they think they're getting pictures of my daughter Sarah, my baby, they're not getting them. If those people think that, then they have no shame."

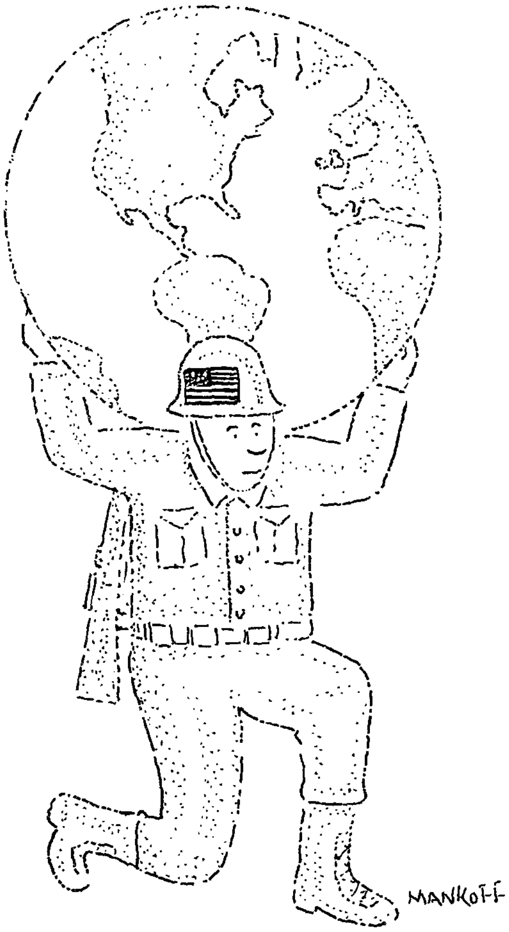
The Smithsonian curators also expressed enthusiasm for several artifacts they discovered in the Makeup Department, the busy room on the nineteenth floor where each week's issue of the magazine was put together and laid out—a room that was traditionally populated by staff members known for their technical proficiency, their instinct for male bonding, and their liberal definition of what constituted a repeatable joke. In the early days of the magazine, each member of the Makeup Department was issued a shovel and a piece of coal and a kerosene lamp. More recently, computers were introduced. But most of the equipment was original, so the Smithsonian requested and received several bulletin boards and tables and file cabinets and a pneumatic tube.

It is by no means a foregone conclusion that these new acquisitions will someday be on public display at the Smithsonian. Under ideal circumstances, Trillin's daybed might turn up in the Twentieth-Century Exhibition at the National Museum of American History. One complication, however, was explained to us by Pete Daniel, the curator of the Twentieth-Century Exhibition. "There is no money available right now to install the Twentieth-Century Exhibition, nor is there really any hope for money," he said. "These things won't be on exhibition for at least five years—and not necessarily ever. In the meanwhile, we'll store them either at the museum or maybe off-site, in Silver Hill, Maryland."

When Mr. Daniel is not dreaming about the Twentieth-Century Exhibition, he is the supervising curator of the Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. According to his colleague Mr. Bunch, he is also "the most literate man in the museum." It was Mr. Bunch who described for us the mechanics of transporting this fascinating material to Washington. "We plan to get into your old offices a few days after you've moved to your new ones," he said. "Members of our technical staff, rather than curators, make the last trip. Three of our staff people, plus a truck driver, will go up to New York. They'll be able to load everything the day they arrive, and that evening they'll lock the truck and park it at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, on Ninety-first Street. The next morning, they'll drive back to Washington. And while the truck's parked in New York maybe we'll leave a sign in the window that says 'No Daybed.' Or else 'Literary Stuff—of Little Importance.' "

Family Business

UNFORTUNATELY, we already have as many bench dogs as we need (none). We are similarly well supplied with bottoming taps, door skins, nooker knives, Megaflutes, gouge slips, and Soss invisible hinges. We wish that this were not the case. Nothing would give us more pleasure than to buy a dozen pounce wheels and arrange them on our desk. But even a single pounce wheel would constitute, for us, a surplus. We realized this recently when we visited Albert Constantine & Son, on Eastchester Road in the Bronx, and looked with longing upon the vast extent of what we don't require.



Constantine's sells supplies to woodworkers. The company is best known for its veneers. Woodworkers use veneers (along with veneer saws, veneer hammers, veneer glue, veneer pins, veneer rollers, veneer tape, veneer strippers, and veneer trimmers) to add relatively interesting surfaces to relatively uninteresting pieces of wood. The storage area at Constantine's is piled high with slices of veneer representing more than eight dozen species of trees, among them oak, maple, ash, mahogany, bubinga, kelobra, tchitola, bengue, and wenge. Most of the slices are several inches wide, several feet long, and a thirty-second of an inch thick. The most expensive veneer is Macassar ebony, which comes from India; it sells for as much as three dollars and twenty cents a square foot.

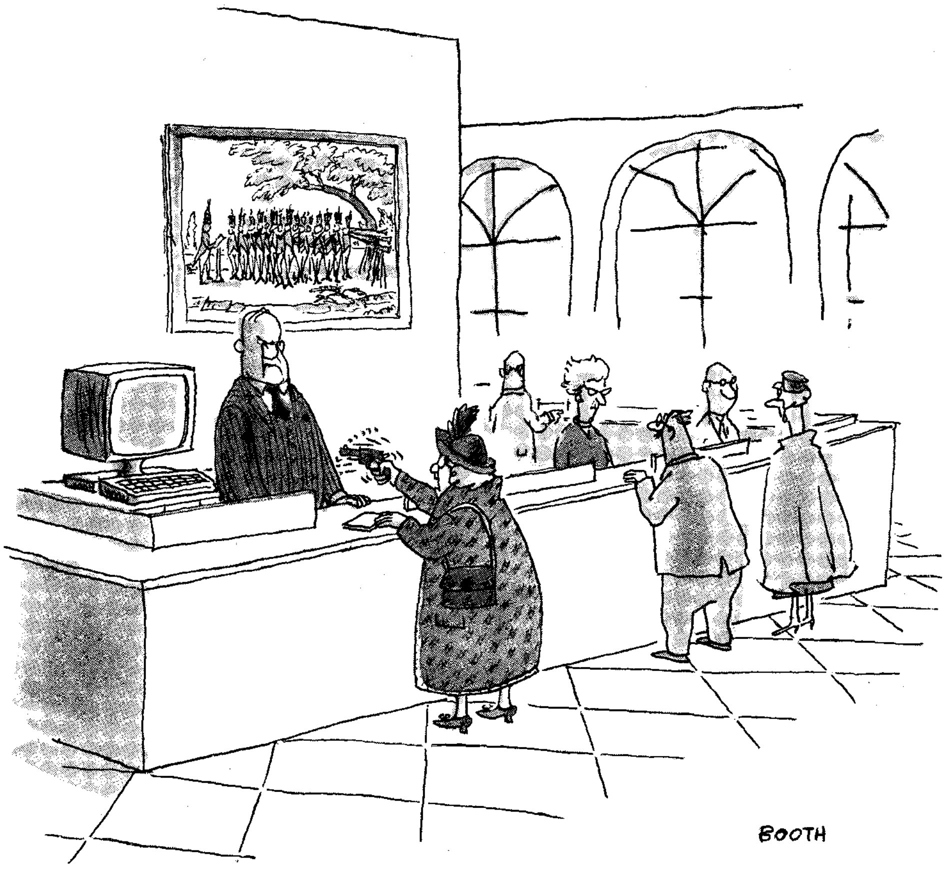
David Brinkley and Andy Rooney—to name two employees of the news divisions of television networks—have been known to make purchases from Constantine's. The company's other customers include the restoration department of Sotheby's, various people doing various kinds of historical preservation at the White House, and a company that makes (or, at any rate, used to make) limousines for Donald Trump. Most of Constantine's business is conducted through the mail; the company annually sends a million and a half copies of its catalogues to woodworkers all over the world. A number of years ago, the F.B.I. was able to capture a fugitive who was known to be a woodworker by waiting for him to order something from Constantine's and then swooping down on the return address.

Constantine's is a family business. It was founded, under the name of Constantine & Company, by Thomas Constantine in 1812. Thomas was a cabinetmaker and a log inspector, and his shop was in lower

Manhattan. In 1818, the United States government hired him to provide furnishings for the Senate, which was being rebuilt following the burning of the Capitol by the British during the War of 1812. Hanging on a wall of a hallway on the second floor of the present-day Constantine's is a copy of Thomas's invoice for that job. The invoice lists charges for carpeting, silk, molding, tables, chairs, desks, sofas, and decorative stairs, among other things. The desks—there was one for each of the Senate's forty-two members, and six extra for anticipated new senators—were made of mahogany and cost thirty-four dollars apiece. The desks are still in use in the Senate chamber.

Thomas eventually passed his business on to Thomas, Jr., who passed it on to Albert, who passed it on to Albert, Jr., who passed it on to Gertrude (his widow), who is still active in the company. Dorothy Constantine Docherty (her daughter) is its president, and manages the day-to-day business with the help of Glenn and John Docherty (her sons). As the business descended through the generations, it ascended through the city of New York, moving to 135th Street in the early part of this century and to its present site in the mid-fifties. (There is also a retail store in Fort Lauderdale; it is managed by John.)

Not long ago, we went up to Eastchester Road and met with Glenn Docherty, whose title is vice-president. Hanging on a wall of Glenn's office is an intricately engraved sword that belonged to John Constantine, his great-great-great-great-uncle and the brother of Thomas. John Constantine served as a captain in the War of 1812, and he worked for a time in Thomas's shop. Running along two walls of Glenn's office is a counter made from two two-inch-thick slabs of padauk, an orange-red wood that was once harvested primarily by convicts on certain islands in the Bay of Bengal, and was used extensively by the Pullman Company to trim the interiors of its railway cars. Glenn's counter was constructed by Sal Marino, a Constantine's employee who conducts woodworking classes on weekends in a big shop on the second floor. Constantine's customers will sometimes drive to the store with troublesome woodworking projects in the trunks of their cars, and Sal will go down to the street and have a look.



"Stand aside, Gruenwald! It's the computer I'm blowing away!"

Glenn, who has worked at Constantine's for thirty-three years, is thirty-eight years old. His first duties consisted of counting brass drawer pulls and other small items and putting them in plastic bags. "That's how I learned arithmetic," he says. In time, he was promoted to labelling. When he was about to graduate from college, his grandmother Gertrude Constantine asked him whether he was interested in coming into the business full time. If not, she said, she was inclined to sell the company and retire. Glenn told her that he would like to give it a try. Today, Glenn and his mother shoulder most of the executive responsibilities. (On the day we visited, Dorothy Docherty was tracking down bad checks on one of the company's computers.) Gertrude, who was once called "the first lady of hardwoods" in a magazine article, and is now in her eighties, works several days a week in a large office near the offices of her daughter and her grandson. Its walls are covered with flexible, adhesive-backed veneer, a product that has been very popular in recent years.

After Glenn outlined the company's history for us, he took us on a tour of the premises. He showed us a copy of the company's first mail-order catalogue, which was published in 1931 and was four pages long. He showed us an award that the company had won in 1983 for being a distinguished dealer in adjustable clamps. He showed us a photograph of his grandfather Albert Constantine, Jr., receiving a citation of some kind from Mayor LaGuardia. Then he took us downstairs and showed us a great deal of wood. We saw slabs of mahogany (destined to become bar tops, he said) and chunks of lignum vitae, a dark, resinous wood that is so dense it sinks in water. Also, of course, we saw lots of veneers. Elsewhere in the building, he showed us a box filled with ready-made table legs, a big pile of C-clamps (which in England are called G-Cramps), a stack of prewoven cane seats for chairs, and a selection of preassembled veneer faces for making chess and backgammon boards.

At the end of our tour, Glenn gave us a box containing fifty veneer samples, each of which measured four inches by nine. Constantine's sells these sets (for twelve dollars and fifty cents apiece) to woodworkers who want to learn more about different types of wood. We picked out the red cedar right away; it smelled like a hamster cage. To identify the other veneers, we had to consult a printed key that was included in the box. We especially liked the zebrawood sample, which had wavy brown stripes and looked like a sensibly thin slice of a fattening dessert.

When we got back to our office, we spread out all our samples on a table and looked at them for quite a while. Then we got tired of looking at them, and we tried to think of a project. The only woodworking equipment we could find in our office was a roll of Scotch Tape, some paper clips, and an X-Acto knife. After making several false starts, we used this equipment to build a sort of long, thin box with a walnut lid. We raised and lowered the lid, which had hinges of Scotch Tape. Then we heard somebody coming, and we quickly put everything away.

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Poets

Michael Lally and Eve Brandstein, two poets who happen to work in the movie business, noticed a while ago that they had a lot of friends, such as Justine Bateman and Moon Unit Zappa, who were rich and famous and also liked to write poetry. So they started a reading series called "Poetry in Motion" in a night club in Los Angeles, with celebrities providing the poetry (and waiters, presumably, providing the motion). Lately, Mr. Lally and Ms. Brandstein have been bringing their readings once a month to Tommy Tang's, a Thai-Californian restaurant in TriBeCa. "We don't do this for the press," Mr. Lally told us when we called him in L.A. a month ago. "But I'll tell you one thing: Alec Baldwin dropped in last time in New York, wrote a poem at a table, and then just got up and *read* it."

We ourself dropped in at Tommy Tang's for the poets' next visit, and we heard Dennis Christopher (whom we didn't recognize but who is described in a reference work called "Halliwell's Filmgoer's and Video Viewer's Companion" as an "American leading man of the eighties") elegize the first time he did a number of things that we'd rather not mention. Ally Sheedy, who once wrote a book about a mouse living in the hair of Elizabeth I, read a couple of poems, one of them about her realization that her ex-boyfriend's body wasn't that great. Many of the poems rhymed. (One of Mr. Lally's—he gets to read as many as he likes—goes, "This isn't about fame; this is about the end of fame when we get to reveal how we're all the same.") Some of the poets weren't famous, but all of them—Jennifer Blowdryer, who resembles Madonna, for instance, and Bruce Isaacson, who resembles Morticia—looked as if they were.

For every reading, Mr. Lally and Ms. Brandstein set a theme—a recent one was "You Like Me, You Really Like Me"—but their success in persuading poets to adhere to it has been limited. The night we were there, the theme was "Twist in My Sobriety," but the audience was treated not only to a poem about an alcoholic making a scene at Denny's but also to poems about abortion, sleeping with Federico García Lorca, and a compulsion to buy Japanese accessories.

The other major activity of the evening was poets hugging each other. Patti D'Arbanville, an actress who, we knew from *People*, is "no longer just Don Johnson's ex," got up to read, and tears were streaming down her face, because Ms. Sheedy's poem about getting pregnant in a Hilton had moved her so much. "I don't want to sound pretentious," Mr. Lally told us. "But since we started these readings there's been less violence in Hollywood movies and more community, romance, and healing. People are just excited by the power of truth."

Mr. Lally and Ms. Brandstein got so excited by the power of truth that this spring they published a collection of poems culled from their series. It's called "The Hollywood Review," and in its introduction Ms. Brandstein writes that "poetry belongs to the people." The people she has in mind are, among others, Jennifer Chambers Lynch, the author of "The Secret Diary of Laura Palmer"; Terry Kirkman, the author of the song "Cherish"; and Lynn Manning, the Blind Heavyweight Judo Champion of the World. All of them are represented in the collection. Also included in it are a poem about Harry Dean Stanton's first day of school ("and a big boy stepped on my toe" is one line) and one about Robert Downey, Jr.,'s private parts and some gorillas. Mr. Lally writes in the introduction that he is somewhat concerned about the "myth" that you can't be in show business and be a fine poet, too. "If Walt Whitman were alive today," he asserts, "he'd be out here in L.A. checking out what's going on and he'd wanna be part of the scene. . . . If Václav Havel can be President, a poet can win an Academy Award."

ASK SHERMAN STRONG

EVERY week Sherman Strong, millionaire, replies to readers' financial requests. You may write to him care of a newspaper, Department of the Treasury, Rockville, MD 20850.

Dear Sherman Strong,

I'm a cheap, cheese-ball chiseller too lazy to pay my own freight. But why should I bust my hump when there's rich saps like *you*, Sherman Strong, just waitin' to hand over some of that long green to *me*? Ha-ha! Very good, Mr. Sherman Strong—you do the work, I get the cash. That's an arrangement the way I like it! You bet I'll take your money, as much as you can give for as long as you can shell it out. What for? That's my lookout. I'll feather my bed with it, Mr. Sherman Strong, and tell the world what a prize sucker I found in you. And when the dough runs out, instead of getting a job I'll come right back to you with my sack in my hand. Fill it up, Sherman Strong, and keep it coming. Money-money-money-money-money! Fat cats like you were just made for fellows like me.

R.G., Lake Forest, Ill.

Dear R.G.,

You are right about one thing—I do have money. How much, exactly? Truthfully, I couldn't tell you an exact dollar amount: tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, possibly even a million dollars (depending on the stock market, and the repayment on a few loans owed to me). Enough to keep an accountant busy for several days, let me assure you.

Yes, I could give you as much as three or four hundred dollars with a simple stroke of the pen, and never feel it at all. Even a sum as large as four hundred and fifty dollars, while great to you, would hardly be missed by me. But I'm not going to do that, Mr. R.G. You see money simply as a commodity. To me, money stands for hope, and dreams, and progress, and ordinary people all over the world helping other people who have it already to do the things they enjoy. But that is something I'm afraid you'll never understand.

Dear Sherman Strong,

So—the brush-off, eh? Not so fast, *Mister* Strong. Chintzy little pointy-toothed advantage-taking ratty guts of my sort don't give up so easy. No way, no day. As you know, if I put half the effort into honest work that I do into cadging and finagling and stiffing people, I'd be richer than you. So here I am, comin' back atcha: you got, I want. Gimmee!

R.G., Lake Forest, Ill.

[No answer. File.—S.S.]

Dear Sherman Strong,

My wife fell down and broke her hip last week. But that's not why I'm writing you. I'm writing you . . . oh, just to write you. I read your column every week. I love the way you're smiling, in your picture, that is. It makes me think you're nice. I want to tell you that I've read your column every time I've seen it. My problem is this.

Mrs. A.R.,
Egg Harbor City, N.J.

Dear Mrs. A.R.,

Now you're talking, and I read you loud and clear. By the time you see this, a check in your initials may be already on its way to the charity of your choice, either from me or someone else. A gesture such as yours, taking a moment to do what you did—that's what sharing is all about. God bless!

Hey! Sherman Strong!

What's the hangup there, Sherman? I go to my mailbox, I got a lot of no-answer from you. Somebody put a crimp in your cash flow? Listen, there's no hurry. I got all the time in the world. I'm just sitting here on my duff, mooching off very close personal friends of mine, you know the kind I mean, the kind I want *you* to be. Hey, I'll try anything, just so long as I don't accidentally do anything for anybody else. Get that money moving my way, the sooner the better. I have some cheesy, ratty discretionary purchases I want to make. Pay up, bub.

R.G., Lake Forest, Ill.

[File.—S.S.]

Dear Sherman Strong,

I am not a welfare fraud, and I don't cheat on my taxes, dip into the till at work, or sign time sheets for hours I haven't put in. I don't hide people in the trunk of my car when I go to a *drive-in movie*, or "sample" items in a grocery store unless I intend to pay for them. Unlike many others in our society, I don't rent furnished apartments and then sell the contents to any of a number of used-furniture dealers found in the yellow pages. It just goes against my grain. I don't file false insurance claims, no matter how hard they would be to check, and if money is paid to me in error, I return it. I don't take things that don't belong to me, I have never once been the recipient of an illegal payment or donation, and I would never ask for or accept charity from you or anyone else. Give me $2,500.

George Abshire,
Sidney, Nebraska

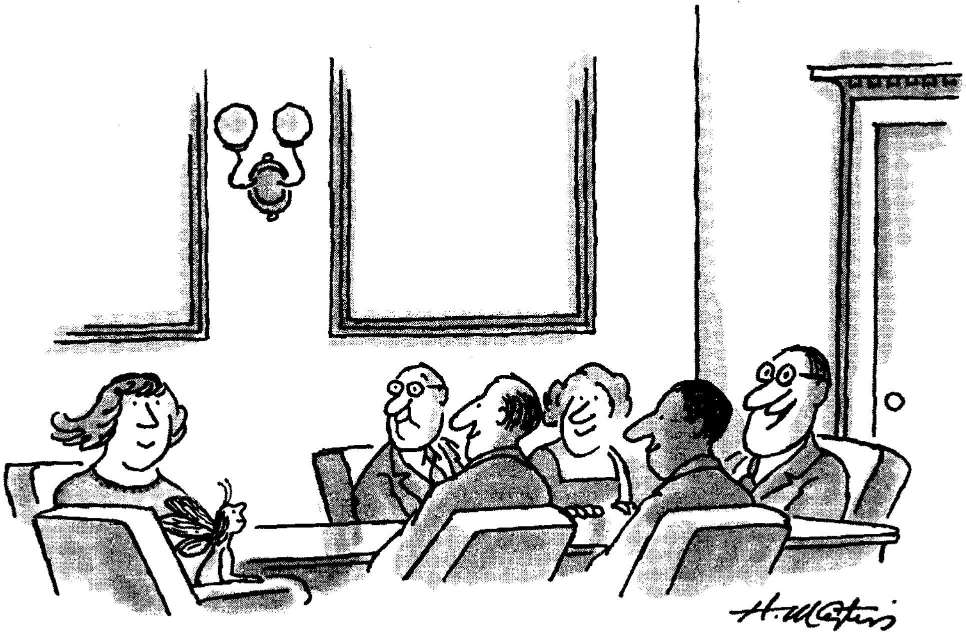
Dear Mr. Abshire,

I wonder if you have any idea how much money twenty-five hundred dollars actually is. Perhaps you will understand more clearly if I put it this way: what you are asking for is two *thousand* five hundred dollars, or, to put it in layman's terms, nearly three *thousand* dollars. Even at my level of affluence, it is a sum I see only very rarely. The sheer bulk of that much cash is something of which the average person has no grasp. Imagine, if you can, a hundred-dollar bill; then imagine twenty-five of them, one on top of another. That stack would fill a standard business envelope to the thickness of one-eighth of an inch, and all solid hundreds.

However, because of your many fine qualities, I believe you are entitled to a reward. Take this column and show it to the bartender at your local watering hole; then tell him to give you a drink, on the house!

Dear, dear Sherman Strong,

Inasmuch as I am a dedicated sort of leech, and inasmuch as I love nothing better than a fat, dumb, and happy meal ticket such as yourself, I am hereby writing once again for a nice big wad of free money. Proceeding forthwith and henceforth, you will direct your agents, Messrs. Chump & Chump, Inc., to advance to my account via bonded cash courier a sizable payment, the first of many to follow on a schedule to be determined by me. Meanwhile,



"It gives me great pleasure to welcome Jenji, the first sprite to serve on the board of the National Forestry Association."

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I'll just lay back with my feet up on the cocktail table smoking a borrowed cigar and let John-down-the-road handle my responsibilities as a human being—gratis, of course.

Hey, don't get me wrong. It's not that I really *need* the dough. But only a schmo would miss out on a gravy train like you. So, how about a cool fifty grand, for starters? Make that sixty.

As ever,
R.G., Lake Forest, Ill.

[Don't file. Discard.—S.S.]

Dear Mr. Strong,

Several months ago I wrote to you asking for funds to pay for a much-needed vacation from clerical duties, a trip to Disney's Epcot Center, in Florida. As the days went by with no response, I had just about given up hope. Then last Friday I looked in my mailbox and found an official-looking envelope containing a tax-refund check from the federal government made out in my name with no strings attached! I simply cannot tell you how happy you have made me. The amount was enough to cover transportation, meals, a four-day hotel stay, and extras besides. You are a prince, Mr. Strong. If only there were more like you.

Rev. Michael Pattison
Clearwater, Fla. 34625

Dear Rev. Pattison,

Helping a person at no cost is one of the greatest satisfactions this little column of mine can provide. The knowledge that I could have sent you a check myself had I chosen to reminds me of how fortunate I have been. So why shouldn't I share some of that good fortune with my fellowman, in principle? I don't suggest notions like that merely in the hopes of receiving a reward in Heaven—but I bet a good word from you wouldn't hurt. Have a ball, and don't mention it!

Dear Sherman Strong,

Pursuant to my missive of the 21st inst., I once again take pen in hand to request bucks by the carload from you, Mr.

[Discard.—S.S.]

Dear Sherm,

Having decided at this juncture that it would be advantageous for me to acquire a bunch of stuff that I want but can't pay for,

[Discard.]

My good friend, Sherman,

As down payment toward the purchase of a snazzy new sports sedan with privacy glass, I'll be needing

[Discard.]

Dear "Got-Rocks" Strong,

In order that I may continue to coast down easy street, what say you give me

[Discard.]

Dear Sherman,

Please remit all surplus scratch A.S.A.P. to

[Discard.]

Dear Readers:

Sometimes, at the end of the column, I like to take a moment just to chat with you. You know, I receive three thousand to five thousand letters a week from you, and the vast majority of them are nice. You're good, generous people, living hand to mouth—I salute you. I know what it is to have to work for a living, because I've seen people doing it; I'm sure we all have. I don't resent your pleas for money. I give my full attention to each and every one, and then judge solely on the merits. Sherman Junior and daughter Carol and I sit in the afternoons in the office part of the house with mail just heaped around our feet. When a letter strikes us as particularly new in approach, we sometimes read it aloud. Every so often, one or more will really get to me. You may think that other rich people and I are very different from you. Well, we are and we aren't. I'd like to explain what I mean with a little story.

Thirty years ago I was a young patent attorney.

Well, a lot has changed since then. Look around you. On every corner, individuals who think the world owes them a living. Check-bouncers, bill-dodgers, fare-jumpers, payment-skippers—the world owes them exactly what they deserve, which is precious little. Fortunately, ours is a system devised long ago by men far wiser than ourselves, which insures to those who possess wealth the power to keep it, and to those who don't good wishes for the best of luck. You see, money, in and of itself, is important; but what is even more important is obtaining other money in addition. And far, far beyond either of these is the rich inner satisfaction. Supposedly, it is a feeling which no amount of money can buy.

—Ian Frazier

THE PROFUMO AFFAIR

“HE’S a friend of the family’s and a friend of Daddy’s,” my sister said on the telephone from London on the night that I was to go to the King’s Inn with Pat Dolan. “He’s a barrister.”

“I don’t care, that won’t stop me,” I felt like saying to her. I knew he was going to want to get off with me, just the way I used to sense that situation with some boy when I was a teen-ager. But I was not a teen-ager now. I was thirty-eight years old, but I felt the way I did when I was a teen-ager. I was running around the house getting ready to go out. The air was quite cool; it was October, Halloween. My mother had died only ten days before. I had come back to Dublin from America, where I lived, when I heard how ill she was, and I had been there for her last two days. It was extraordinary for me to be looking at other people looking at my mother in a coffin. Little boys staring at her, fiddling with the brass handles of her coffin. Little boys who were not crying—second cousins I had never met. I wanted to say, “That is my mother, why don’t you cry?” But I just looked at them. Strange the way children are so heartless.

Death is sexual: that’s strange, too. I’d actually had waves of sexual feeling, following the hearse from the hospital to the chapel. Now I was in my mother’s bedroom. My mother’s suitcases were on the floor with her papers in them. I felt excited. Could you believe that my mother had died and I felt excited? This was my first night alone in the house since my mother had died. A few days earlier, my sister had returned to London. Then this morning, my husband, who had come over to Dublin for the funeral, went back home to America. We emigrated from Ireland together long ago. When I was leaving for the States originally, my friends gave me a present of a bracelet and composed a poem for me. I remember how it ended:

> When you’ve made your first million
> and are up and away,
> Don’t forget tribal days back in old
> Dublin Bay.

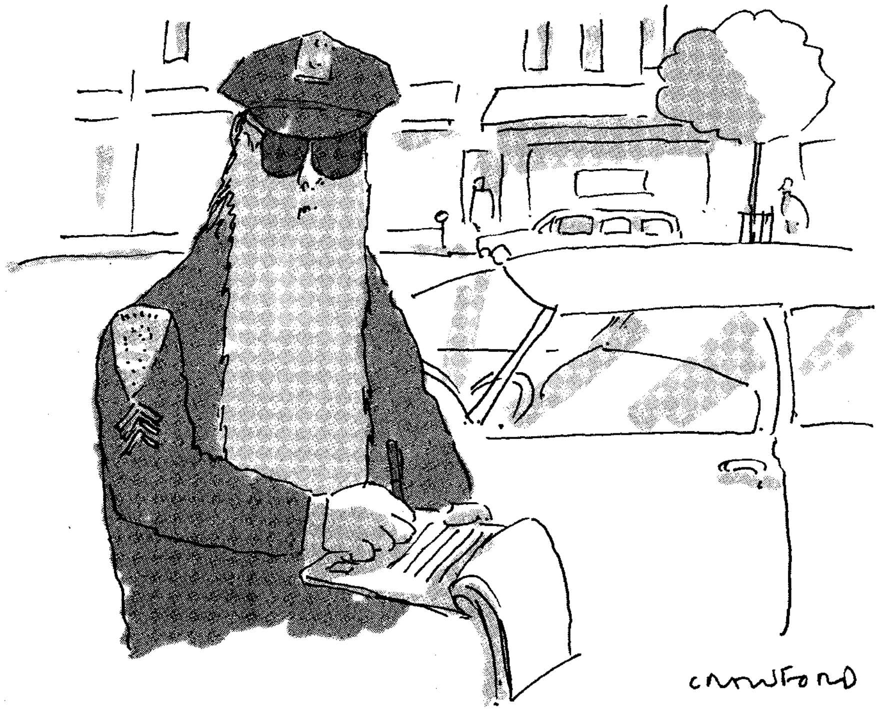
That was fourteen years ago.

I was looking in the mirror. The house was quiet, no ghosts coming up the stairs. The mirror was big, a big square mirror almost filling one wall. Above the fireplace near the mirror was a picture of the Agony in the Garden. *Into thy hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.* My mother probably said those words every night going to sleep alone for the last twenty years of her life. *Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.* That’s the way the prayers began when I was a child. In this same house, I’d walk up the stairs carrying a hot-water bottle in a pillowcase. I was about four years old. I was sitting in bed waiting for my mother to come up and say prayers with me. At the end of the prayers we had to bless everyone—my mother, my father (who lived somewhere overseas), my sister (who was away at school), all my relations, and everybody else in the whole whole world.

This was the big back room of the house. It was the first room where I remember sleeping alone, although my mother had slept in the front room when I was small. She told me that I used to sleep with her then. My father was a photograph on the mantelpiece downstairs in the sitting room, a dot on a map somewhere. The house had been newly decorated over the past few years. I could remember the various layers in this house. Before the Agony in the Garden picture there was a crucifix on the wall of my room, a Communion present from my sister, and before that again there was a picture of the Sacred Heart.

I won the Sacred Heart in a raffle in school. It was the kind of raffle in which everyone gets a prize. I finished next-to-last in my class, and I was given a choice between two holy pictures for my prize. I hardly saw them, so blinded with disappointment was I that I’d missed the chocolates. My mother put the picture on the wall in my room after I brought it home. The Sacred Heart had scorching eyes that followed me around the room. But every time I opened my eyes when I was trying to sleep, I could still see it, by the light coming in from the street outside. It dimly glimmered, reminding me of the way I looked when I put a torch underneath my chin and looked in the mirror in the dark. Some nights, I used to jump out of bed and turn the picture to the wall. Then I imagined that the picture was turning slowly back again, on its own. The Sacred Heart stared out at me, more like a devil than like Christ.

At lunchtime, when I ran up to my room to get something, my mother had sometimes turned the picture back facing outward, and I had to leap down the stairs in case He threw daggers in my back. Finally my mother had taken it down. She had laughed at the Sacred Heart with His face turned to the wall



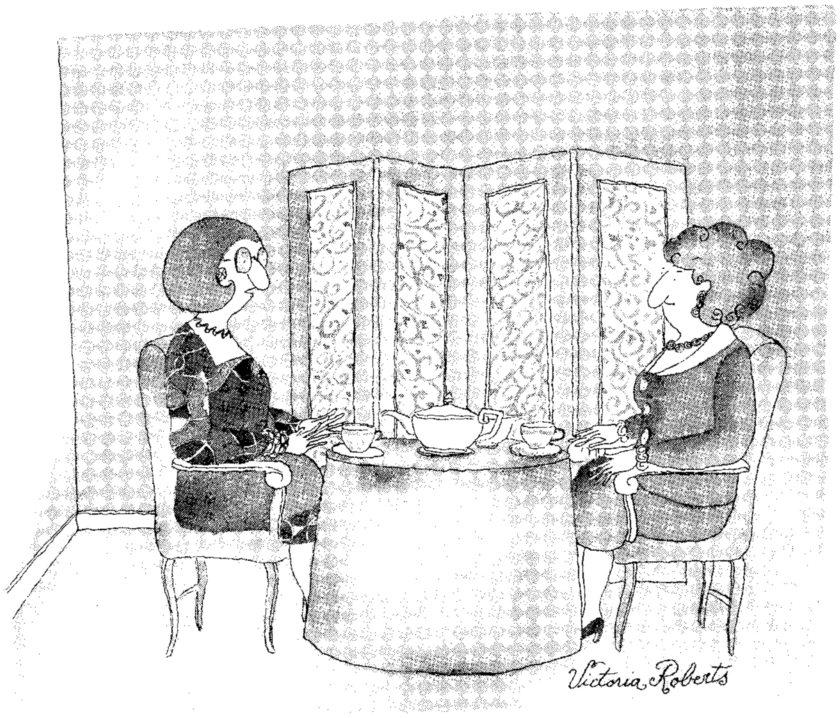
ZZ COP

like a dunce. I had forgotten all about Him.

One spring, my sister and I decided that we would keep snails as pets. We kept them on the kitchen roof, which could be reached through the back spare-room window. One day I ran up the stairs with a lovely, big snail, holding him carefully by the shell and watching him wave his feelers blindly in the air, and into the spare room. The Sacred Heart was there, staring out from the wall. I screamed. I accused my mother of having done it on purpose. "I hate the Sacred Heart!" I cried. After that, He vanished completely. Sometimes, even now, I wonder what has become of Him. I imagine myself searching for something in a trunk in the garage and finding Him under a pile of old clothes. I imagine Him floating up the stairs as I'm doing my hair and appearing behind me in the mirror, the way women see criminals coming into their rooms in movies. He'll be there with that flame like a dagger.

Nothing like that happened. I was brushing my hair, getting ready to meet Pat Dolan. The light was soft. My mother had hugged me the night before she died, from her hospital bed, a really strong hug. *I gave you life, now live it*—that's what it felt like. That was what I said to my son, who was eighteen, one day when I saw him in a room reading Samuel Beckett. "That man Beckett had the life of Riley when he was your age," I said to him. "Don't let him depress you. Don't."

I was putting on my makeup. "Say a little prayer for you"—that's how that song goes. I ran from the bathroom to the bedroom mirror. "*Before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. . . .*" Those were the lines I liked from the Memorare. And "*poor banished children of Eve.*" This reminded me of the final part of "Paradise Lost," where Adam and Eve are walking out the gates of Eden. I found those lines moving, but I couldn't recall them properly. There was something about the world was all before them, late and soon, and the idea was that they were walking together, I thought hand in hand, and yet they were separate, because there was some mention of their solitary way, and the whole theme was of exile and the loneliness of mankind, and that of course led me back to someone like Beckett. I wanted to get away from that man.



"I'm just a passport photo of my former self."

Then, there was the man who played the organ in the church for my mother's funeral. He was crying when my sister and I were making the arrangements. His brother had died recently, he told us. He still talked to him, walking around the house. The man who played the organ was in his sixties or so, and looked a bit dishevelled but in a nice way, a sort of artistic way, and he had that temperament, too. He cried but was able to keep talking, and he was not ashamed of his emotions. He took a photo of himself as a young man out of his pocket and showed it to me and my sister. He was a young man standing against a fence, somewhere in Dublin. He was posed a bit like that photo everyone sees of James Joyce. The hands in the pockets.

The phone rang again. It was my sister once more, from London, wondering if I had reminded my uncle about spending the night in the house with me. It would be desperate, she said, if he forgot and I was alone in the house at a time like this. I felt like saying, "I won't be alone, I'll be sleeping with Pat Dolan." But I didn't. I said that I would call my uncle in a few minutes. No, she said, I was too busy getting ready to go out, she'd call him for me. I was feeling annoyed at the way she was interfering. I wanted to tell her to mind her own business. But I couldn't, really. My sister was the one who introduced Pat Dolan to the family, who made him our friend, and if anyone had an original claim to him it was my sister, if there is such a thing as actually being able to claim another human being. My sister was divorced, but she had a boyfriend, so there was no reason to feel sorry for her. She had always denied anything romantic between herself and Pat Dolan.

"He isn't your husband, is he?"—I could have said that to her. I didn't. I felt that she would try and persuade me from what I wanted to do. I'd be in for all sorts of lectures from her. I got on well with her. She was only a few years older than I, but she hovered over me like a little mother. Chiefly I'd have to undergo her womanizer conversation. She was always going on about terrible womanizers to me. Usually I thought she was hinting about my husband. I always ignored her and walked around busily saying nothing, as if I couldn't possibly imagine whom she might be referring to. Just because a man wasn't sleeping with her, she thought of him as a womanizer. Another reason I didn't say anything to my sister was that she genuinely got depressed about womanizers. After Christina Onassis's

THE FAIR HILL

Like a foulmouthed god of hemp come down to rut,
The rope man stumped about and praised new rope
With talk of how thick it was, or how long and strong,

And how you could take it into your own hand
And feel it. His perfect, tight-bound wares
Made a circle round him: the makings of reins

And bellybands and halters. And of slippage—
Foe even then, knee-high among the farmers,
I knew the rope man menaced them with freedoms

They were going to turn their backs on; and knew too
His powerlessness once the fair hill emptied
And he had to break the circle and start loading.

—Seamus Heaney

• •

death I read things from the newspaper to my sister. She was visiting me at the time, in Detroit. Christina Onassis had said that what she remembered of her childhood was "all the neglect." I still often thought of that remark. I could have saved the life of someone like Christina Onassis.

Anyway, I thanked my sister for her consideration, and put down the phone. Then I phoned a taxi for myself. I ran upstairs and got my bag and put my coat on and waited at the end of the stairs for the taxi to come.

EVEN though I'd heard about this man for years, I'd never met him until the funeral. "Kind Remembrance, Pat," he'd put on the flowers. A few days later he invited my sister and me to lunch. We had a great time. We all had a good bit of wine to drink. On the way back in the taxi he was running his fingers through the curls of my permed hair and pulling me toward him and kissing my hair and pressing the side of one of my breasts. The whole scene was more suited to London than to Dublin, I thought. He reminded me of the way I'd imagine a Member of Parliament would be coming back from lunch. I was thinking what a shock it must be to suddenly see cameras flashing in a window, and then the picture splashed across some newspaper.

I turned out to be right. Pat Dolan wanted to sleep with me. "How did you know?" he asked me later. "I wasn't absolutely positive," I said. "I wasn't sure how far you'd want to go."

FIRST I meet him at the law library and we walk through the dark back streets of Dublin to get to the King's Inn. He's talking about what he does and doesn't like. He's talking about an opera festival he's been to. I'm saying that I like popular-opera songs by people like Verdi and that I like "Carmen." We are walking up the path to the King's Inn. The night reminds me of the time, years ago, when I decided to surrender my virginity. I was happy to have made up my mind. I remember standing under a railway bridge halfway into town. The evening was wet, and I could hear car tires going through the water on the road, and their headlights were flaring. I was with a young man I knew, a quantity surveyor, and he was undoing the buckle of his belt. And then I changed my mind. Later I regretted my decision, because I didn't see him again for about six weeks. I had just turned eighteen. In those days I kept myself to a mental timetable of where and how things should happen.

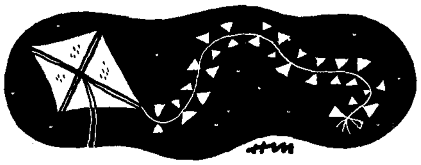
Next, Pat Dolan and myself are walking in the door of the King's Inn. We're in a room with high ceilings. We're at a reception, and people are talking and drinking sherry and there is a roaring fire in the grate. I'm being introduced to other people. "A pretty woman for you," Pat Dolan adds when I am talking to another barrister. There are two other women across the room. We smile at each other but never actually speak. I'm not used to this huge building; usually when I'm in a place like this, I'm walking around a museum. We go into the dining room. Chief barristers are walking about and we bow to them. Everyone is nice. They are serving me dishes. I'm sitting at a table with three barristers, counting Pat Dolan. I'm telling them about my life as a Montessori teacher in America. One of my barristers is talking about his college days. He had a professor who had only one eye, he says, but he could see around corners with it. Next, everyone is talking about the Presidential elections here in Ireland. A scandal has broken out about one of the candidates. There is going to be a rally for him, downtown. Everything remains very jovial.

We leave early. Pat Dolan tells the taxi-driver to go straight home. I'm afraid to say that my uncle is in the house, in case he says what of it or something. Still, I announce the news about my uncle as we are getting out of the taxi. I feel very strange that at this hour of my life I have the same level of chaperoning as I did when I was a fifteen-year-old. I say the news about my uncle as if I am delighted, and I sort of amaze myself.

"Is that a fact?" Pat Dolan says.

My uncle is watching the television when we come in. I leave Pat Dolan with my uncle while I go out to make some tea. I arrange cups and saucers on the tray. I am feeling sad that I may lose my chance with Pat Dolan. This event may never happen. When I bring in the tray, the three of us have tea together. My uncle and Pat Dolan are talking about the news. This uncle is my father's brother. My father was involved in my life when I was a teenager. He was very strict with me then. I was in a lot of trouble with him later on, not only because I walked up to the altar pregnant but because I was young and the person I was marrying was poor. My father came from a part of Dublin similar to my husband's, but my father had worked all his life away in Brisbane, trying to rise from that kind of place. My husband and I moved to America for the same reason, but I could never admit things to my father or say anything was the matter.

Pat Dolan does something brainy. "Let me help you with that tray to the



kitchen," he says. He gets up and carries the tray out. I follow him, saying whoever heard of the visitor having to carry out the tray, and start to wash up the dishes. He puts the tray down on the kitchen table and turns around. "Can I stay the night?" he says.

I'm not expecting this question at this moment and I say nothing.

"How long will he be here?" he says, referring to my uncle.

"All night, but you can stay another night."

"Then you agree?" He sounds surprised, as if he didn't expect me to be the sort of married woman whom other men enjoy. We are both laughing in the kitchen. Pat Dolan is hugging me.

"What about tomorrow?" he says. That will be fine, because I'm meant to be clearing out the house, and my friends won't even call because I've told them I'm so busy that I'll have to be the one to contact them. He will come back then, he says. He wonders what we can do immediately and suggests a walk. It is almost midnight and I think it's too peculiar a thing to do now. My uncle will wonder what's going on, and I don't want him to know my business. He may even be wondering what all the whispering is in the kitchen.

"I'll outsit him," Pat Dolan says.

We go back into the room to my uncle and continue talking. Pat Dolan and I sit side by side on the couch, with our hands in our laps, listening to my uncle. He already has his electric blanket switched on, he says. After a while he thinks that his bed will be warm enough and he says good night.

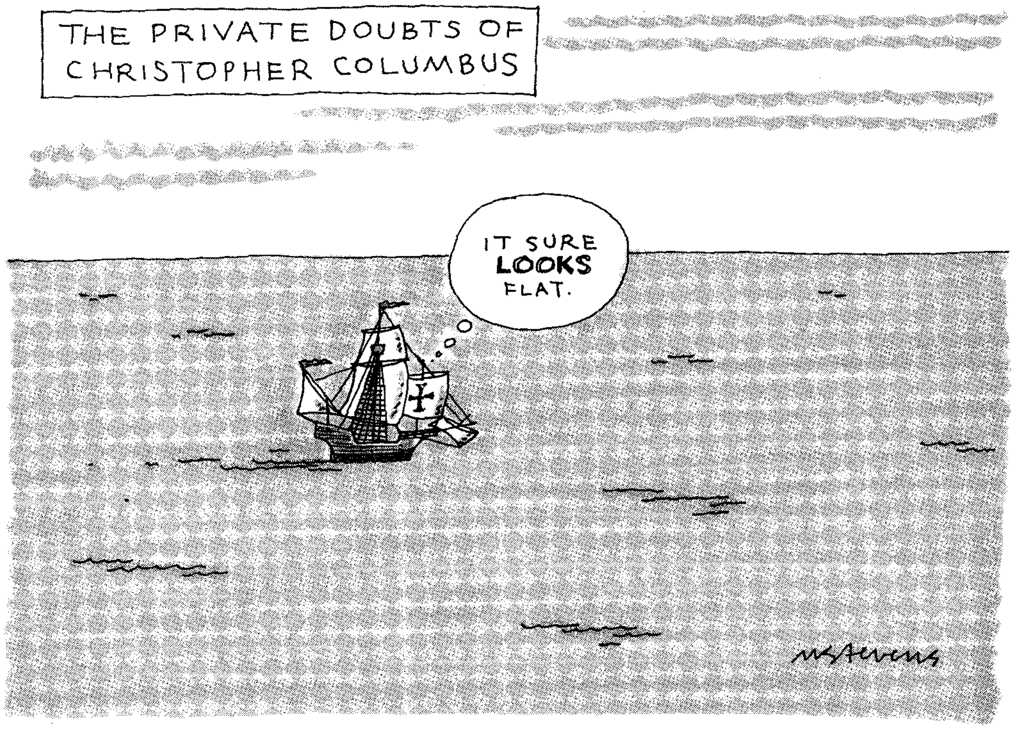
My uncle will be leaving the house at nine-thirty in the morning, and Pat Dolan says that he will come back at ten. He thinks that may be a little awkward if my uncle hasn't left the house, but he has his briefcase with him and now he takes out a paper from it and puts it on the couch. He explains that he can say to my uncle that he forgot the paper. He opens a page to make it appear that we have been discussing legal matters.

I'm laughing, not so much at what Pat Dolan is doing but because my husband happens to have a similar briefcase. My husband isn't a barrister, he's a carpenter. He's a lovely-looking carpenter. Sometimes he reminds me of someone from a gang out of "West Side Story." Whenever I think of him that way I know I am being possessive. Once, we had an argument and he said to me, "Let go or I'll hit you and I won't be responsible for the strength of my fist." Later, he said he was sorry. But sometimes I go around thinking that I will be responsible for the strength of mine.

I sleep in the front bedroom tonight—not the room I was in earlier. I keep tossing and turning the whole night, it seems. There's a picture on the wall of this room, too, on the wall above the fireplace. It's a reproduction of Raphael's Madonna and child, and it was my mother's favorite picture. It's in a hexagonal gold frame and I can see the shape of it even in this light. Every so often I can hear my uncle, in the small front bedroom, talking in his sleep in a deep voice.

THE next morning, everything goes according to schedule. My uncle and I have breakfast together. He leaves the house and Pat Dolan comes back shortly after ten. We have a cup of tea together in the kitchen. I'm standing with my back to the window and the kitchen sink, looking at Pat Dolan sitting on a chair at the table. It's strange watching this man I hardly know. I'm looking forward to the day. Other people will be doing mundane things, as I am meant to be doing, but I won't be. It's great, really. I have this whole free day ahead of me. When I'm rinsing cups Pat Dolan goes into the sitting room and puts his contract or whatever in his briefcase. Then he runs up the stairs. I can hear his footsteps across the landing. He moves quickly and is sort of energetic. There are other things in life, I suppose, but other people can do them today.

We are both quiet taking our clothes off. I feel quite casual, considering this is a first situation of this type for me. It's as if I'd been planning it for a long time and hadn't got the right opportunity. What might be trivial to other people is often a big deal to me. The air feels cool, even though the heat is on, and the sheets are cold. My breasts are just the right distance apart, according to Pat Dolan. I get all sorts of compliments (not that I suppose I would cease to exist if I didn't), but still it's nice to hear that I'm a beautiful woman. Pat Dolan talks to me a lot that way, and that's the main difference between this man and my husband, but I don't say anything. I don't feel the need to talk, even though loads of things have happened to me—loads of sad things, not


THE PRIVATE DOUBTS OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
IT SURE LOOKS FLAT.

just my mother's death but other things in life. They are the sort of things that might even make other people cry. All sorts of failures have accumulated in my life, all sorts of things that I don't want to think about, but this morning isn't one of them.

We don't even have a glass of water, the whole day. We have lots of conversations. Pat Dolan lies in bed with his hands behind his head and he talks toward the ceiling a lot, as if people have not been listening to him for a long time. He talks about the meaning of his life, and he speaks about his wife a good bit, really, and describes her in a flattering way, appearance-wise. But something happened in their lives ten years ago, he says, and things have not been the same, and it's hard to regain someone's trust once you lose it. "But I will not beg," he says.

"Will you not?"

"No," he says.

Pat Dolan's wife doesn't sleep with other men, even though it would do her good, Pat Dolan says, because it's good for a woman to feel desired. But she worries all the time about Pat Dolan's reputation. "Your reputation, Pat, your reputation," she's always saying. She's a terrible woman for reputations, and rightly so, Pat Dolan says, because some days he even sits across from the Attorney General of Ireland, in the law library of the Four Courts. But divorce is not always the answer, and Pat Dolan believes in salvaging the good. And he speaks about his college-age sons—about one he hits it off with particularly well, and how that son once described him, Pat Dolan, as a man fond of his desserts. He said that at the dinner table and it made Pat laugh. But I don't worry about Pat Dolan's wife. I've already enough on my hands without adding Pat Dolan's wife. She gets fifty per cent of all that belongs to Pat Dolan. That's enough.

"What turns you on?" That is one question that Pat Dolan asks me several times. Whatever it is, he wants to do it for me. I am saying that plain ordinary straightforward sex is enough for me. I will probably go down in history as one of the most unusual people of the twentieth century. But I am a bit insulted by the question, as if Pat Dolan were just using this situation with me so that he can go home and try to turn on his wife. I think about the situation for a while, and I decide that I will say something.

"Jealousy."

"Jealousy turns you on? And is that why you sleep with married men?"

"I don't, except for my husband and now you."

I explain that I don't even think of my husband as a married man and that it's jealousy the other way around—that when my husband sleeps with other women it makes me jealous. My husband isn't a dessert person. He's a main-course person.

"And do you not like ever to look around at a table and say to yourself, 'I've had them all'?" Pat Dolan wants to know.

But I never think that way. Now I do. I'm wondering what Pat Dolan's mother might be like.

We talk about life in America. Pat Dolan wants to know what my life is like there. I say that some sad things have happened to me and that living with an Irish carpenter is not always easy, and that emotionally I have probably survived, like one of the Kennedys but without the glamor or the consolation prizes. But I don't want to talk about things that have happened, in case it ruins our day together.

"Fair enough," says Pat Dolan.

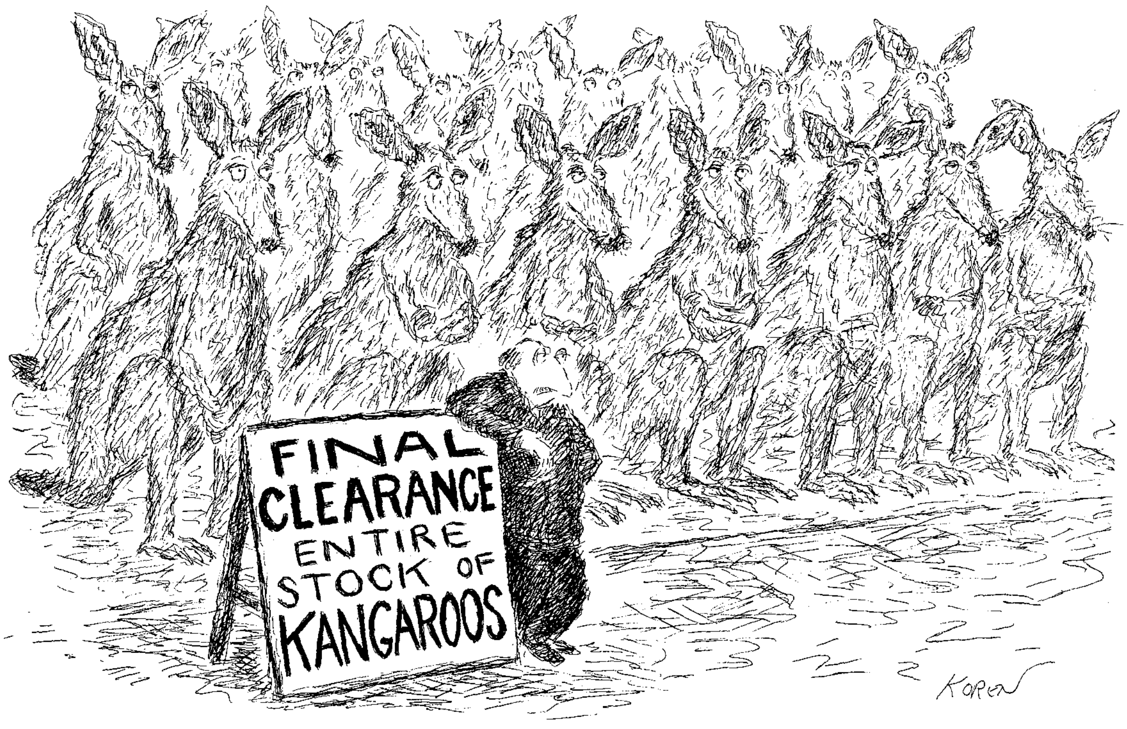
Shortly before he goes he makes a telephone call. He says to the person that he can be reached at this number for the next half hour. He's feeling the flesh on one of my thighs and talking in such a businesslike manner about land contracts that I have to put my hand over my mouth to stop myself laughing. When he puts down the phone he looks at his watch. He'll have to go. The courts will be closed, he says.

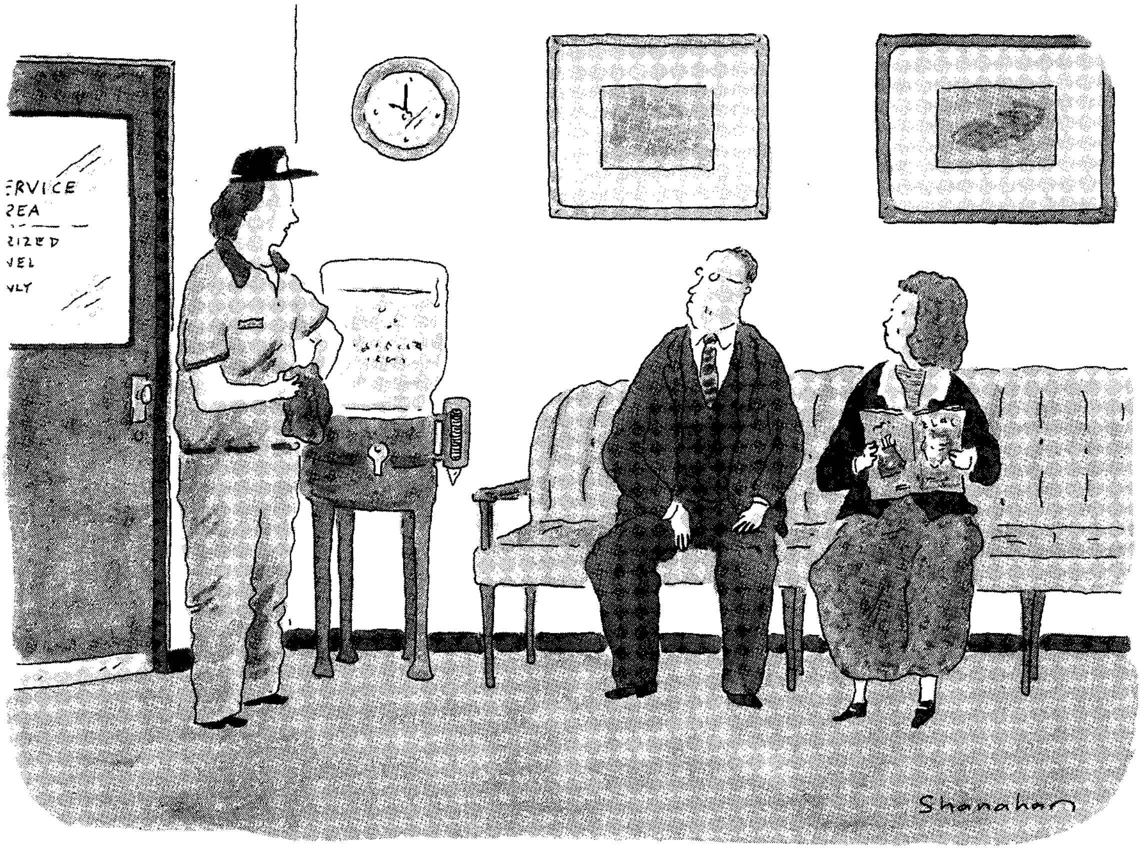
"Is that where you're meant to be?"

"Yes."

It's about four o'clock. The sun is shining in on the wall at the end of the bed. I can hear children playing outside on the road. It feels like one of those long days when I was a child and was ill in bed all day. Next, I'm listening to Pat Dolan taking a shower. Usually there's just been my mother and my sister and me in this house. My father came home in the summers sometimes, when I was a teen-ager. I never remember my father and mother sleeping in the same room. Once my father had left his pajamas on my mother's bed, and she threw them out the door at him. I used to say to her that if she could have been nicer to my father he wouldn't have gone away.

Then I'm watching Pat Dolan getting dressed. He's saying





"We've found the problem. You folks don't own a car."

that he might visit me in America if he can think up a good enough excuse to get away. He's wondering if I ever think of coming back to live in Ireland permanently. I say that I do think of coming back to Ireland but I'm not sure how I can do that and live decently. "If I came back to Ireland, would I be your mistress?" I ask.

"There's a strong possibility, a strong possibility."

I begin to imagine myself as a successful barrister's mistress. It always sounds fun to be the mistress. I imagine myself walking through town with my head held high. I will become impatient with people who waste my time. I will slap policemen. I will go up in lights: "From Preschool Teacher to Courtesan." I will choose hats to wear at the horse show. I will overhear sharp remarks. I will be humming "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina."

We agree to meet again. But we have to be very careful, Pat Dolan says, and I have to remember that I'm back in Ireland again now, in the land of the squinting windows.

"But I'll show you how it's done within the rules," Pat Dolan says on his way out the door. I'm laughing. He's such a rascal or something, and he's such a relief from Mass cards and condolences, even though other people were only trying their best. Often when I'm out of Ireland I think to myself that there's still somewhere in the world to look forward to. I walk around the house thinking that there are still things to be happy about.

I MET Pat Dolan at my mother's funeral. I kept thinking about that when I got back to America. I was in a Detroit department store buying a dress one day, coming up to Christmas. "Panis Angelicus" came on over the recorded background music. I was standing there thinking that the last time I heard that song was at my mother's funeral. It was beautifully sung. I was standing in the store listening to it again. The shop assistant was on the phone ringing up to see if my check was all right. My dress was being wrapped up in white tissue paper. The store was warm. I was standing there seeing myself in the whole scene—the store now and me buying a dress and remembering Dublin—and I felt as if my life were a movie and not really my life at all.

But now my husband knows about me and Pat Dolan, and I'm in trouble with him. He wants to know all the details. I tell him that Pat Dolan is a deadly normal man in his fifties, with five grown sons who are probably clones. The way my husband is going on you'd swear I'd been carrying on with Mick Jagger. He notices a little mark on one of my breasts while I'm drying myself in the bathroom, and he wonders where it comes from since he hasn't been near me for a week. I can remember when it was longer between times, but I'm explaining away the place, saying that it could be a little stretch mark from pregnancy. I'm feeling very much the woman in demand. It's good for a woman to feel desired, so Pat Dolan says. He likes to invite people out to dinner and to know that he has slept with the other men's wives at the table. He wants to know what turns me on. I'm thinking that Pat Dolan sits opposite the Attorney General of Ireland in the law library of the Four Courts, some days, and then I think of the Profumo affair and the downfall of governments or something on that line that I would like to happen. Not that I would do anything purposely mean to Pat Dolan. I would like something to happen, something big like the Profumo affair, and to see it in the headlines of the newspaper for some form of relief—from what, I am not quite sure. Show me what you're good at, says Pat Dolan when I tell him about the failures in my life. Yes, those men had sex with someone they're not supposed to, and, yes, it was me, I will say at my interview. I'm not a Russian spy, but I still consider myself to be an important person to have sex with.

—Ethna Carroll

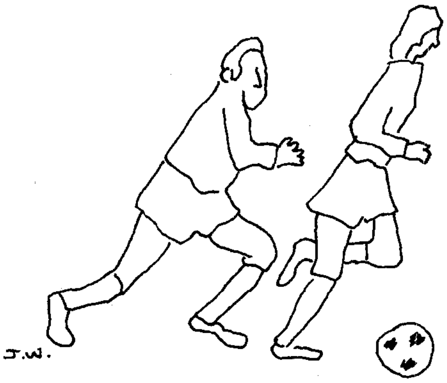
ANNALS OF PLACE

REINVENTING BALTIMORE

VISITORS waiting to see Larry Gibson at his law office, on the twentieth floor of a sleek, bulky building in the heart of downtown Baltimore, can gaze out through a sealed charcoal-gray glass window at the traffic silently crawling below, or look around at photographs that Gibson has taken during many trips to Africa and South America, or read "The Gibson Story," which is hanging in one corner of the office: the framed first page of a four-year-old newspaper article. It's a cover story, with photographs, that appeared in *City Paper*, a local weekly. In the first paragraph Gibson, who—as the architect of the 1987 mayoral campaign, when Baltimore elected a black mayor, Kurt L. Schmoke, for the first time in its two-hundred-and-sixty-two-year history—is now widely regarded around Baltimore as the city's most influential political strategist, tells a story from an older Baltimore: the Baltimore of the early nineteen-sixties. It's a story of turning points, and it's about Gibson's own early exile from the city and his unexpected homecoming and reconciliation with Baltimore.

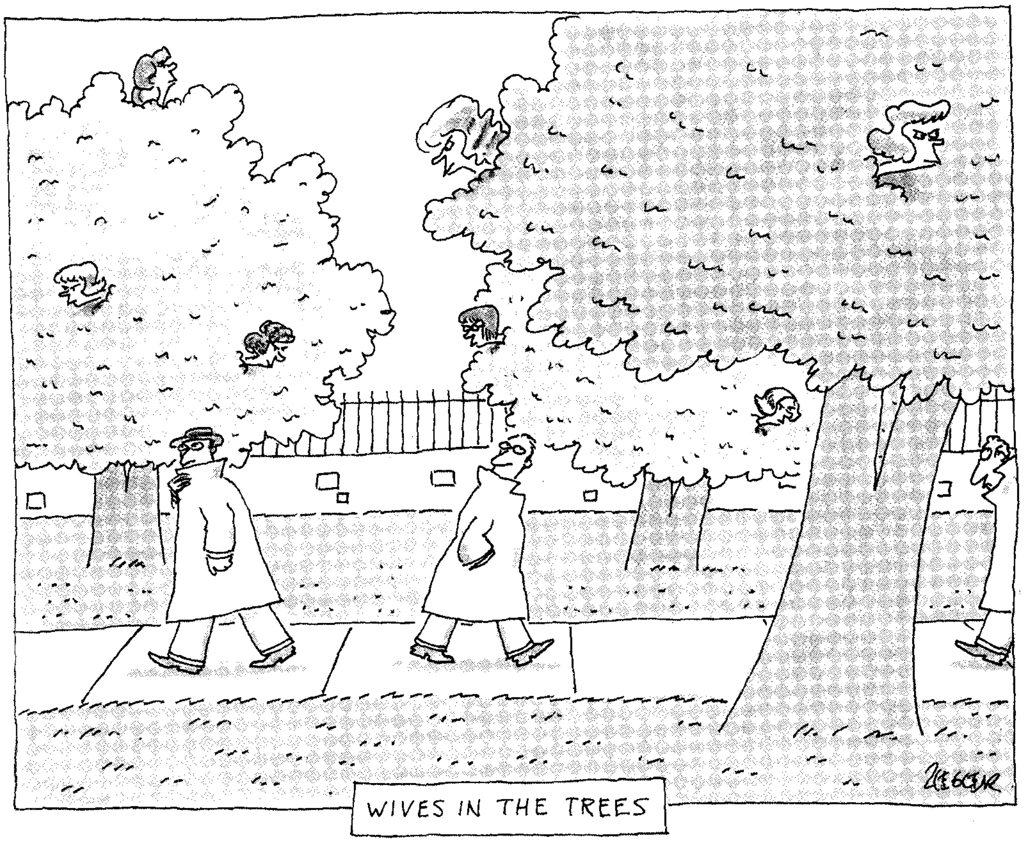
In 1960, when Gibson was seventeen, he left Baltimore for what he thought was the last time. He was going off to college thirty-seven miles away—to Howard University, in Washington—and he fully intended, as he told a *City Paper* interviewer twenty-seven years later, "never to return" to a place he considered nothing more than "a segregated, overgrown small town." In 1966, however, just before his last year at Columbia Law School, Gibson left New York City to work as a summer interne at a big downtown Baltimore law firm, and thus became the first black law student ever to be hired by any of Baltimore's big downtown law firms. And when he looked around then, he said, he saw "a city in transition," and saw that Baltimore was starting to extend to young black lawyers, at least, "opportunities . . . to participate in that transition." Gibson told me, when I went to see him this year, that in 1966 he had been thinking seriously about settling in New York, in the belief that he could make his mark there, but after his summer interneship he decided to return to Baltimore when he finished law school, and build a career in his home town. Without realizing it at the time, Larry Gibson, in returning home, was helping to put an end to one of Baltimore's most self-destructive practices—exporting Baltimoreans to other parts of the country. For a long time, it was mostly blacks who left town. Later, as was true of many American cities, it was mostly whites, pulling up stakes and crossing the city line for life in the suburbs. In 1966, "the two Baltimores," as blacks in Baltimore have always called the city, were for the first time beginning to overlap, if not yet to merge.

After its discussion of estrangement and welcome, the *City Paper* piece turned to what Gibson had accomplished in the twenty-one years since he moved back to Baltimore. In 1968, after a year as a law clerk in the city, he helped Joseph Howard become the first black lawyer elected to a citywide judgeship, and Howard is now a federal judge. In the nineteen-sixties, as an assistant city prosecutor, Howard had done much to make the city aware that Baltimore's white judges routinely showed more concern for white rape victims than they did for black rape victims. Two years after Howard's election, Gibson, in another political first, served as the campaign manager for a black candidate who won a locally important office: in the 1970 citywide election, the black lawyer Milton Allen became district attorney—or State's Attorney, as that official is known in Baltimore. The 1968 election had changed Baltimore politics by convincing black voters that a large black turnout could make a difference, and in the 1970 election, for the first time, a black-white coalition began to form around a black candidate. Allen lasted only one term—he was defeated for reëlection by a white-backlash, self-professed law-and-order candidate—but in no other major American city had a black ever been elected prosecutor.



Since Gibson's return to Baltimore, as "The Gibson Story" points out, he has twice held down jobs in other cities: he has been a law professor at the University of Virginia (he was its first full-time black faculty member), and during the Carter Administration he was for two years an Associate Deputy Attorney General, with responsibilities for supervising criminal-law enforcement. These days, at the age of forty-nine, Gibson is associated with Shapiro & Olander, a well-connected downtown law firm, and he is still a law professor, but now at the University of Maryland, on the western edge of downtown Baltimore. He's also an eager world traveller; he has been to more than forty countries, and he has studied German, French, Spanish, and Japanese. He is once again serving as campaign manager this year, when Mayor Schmoke runs for reëlection, and Gibson will have the job of putting back together the winning citywide black-white coalition that brought Schmoke to City Hall in 1987 and, before that, in 1982 and 1986, twice elected him State's Attorney. It is a coalition based on strong voter turnout in poor black neighborhoods in east and west Baltimore and middle-class black neighborhoods in northwest Baltimore, supported by a substantial number of people from affluent white neighborhoods in north Baltimore.

Schmoke, who will be forty-two years old in December, is a Yale graduate, a Harvard Law School graduate, and a former Rhodes Scholar, and those credentials appeal to north Baltimore. So does the fact that when he returned home to Baltimore from Oxford in the mid-nineteen-seventies to start a law career he was immediately hired by Piper & Marbury, the biggest


WIVES IN THE TREES

and grandest of the old downtown law firms. Last year, Gibson and his family moved to a house in north Baltimore—in Guilford, a leafy neighborhood laid out nearly a century ago by Frederick Law Olmsted's sons, where huge houses are surrounded by giant oaks and tulip poplars that survive from the days when the land was the country estate of Arunah Abell, who founded the Baltimore *Sun*. When Larry Gibson got out of law school, Guilford was still off limits to both blacks and Jews. Deed restrictions on real estate in the area set high architectural standards, protected the ancient landscape, and prevented a number of possible human interactions from taking place. At the closing on the Gibson family's new home, Gibson noticed that the booklet of covenants for the neighborhood still specified that "no Negro or person of Negro extraction" could buy that piece of property. A black line had been neatly drawn through that covenant.

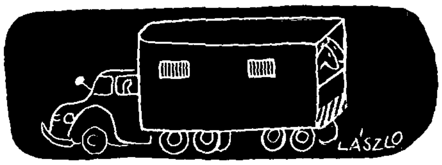
Would you sense a city full of opportunities if you visited Baltimore today? "If you were revisiting Baltimore today after a twenty-year absence, you would find us much prettier and much poorer," Mayor Schmoke told the members of a state tax-study commission at a public hearing last June. In the thirty-one years since Larry Gibson left for college, the city has lost nearly a quarter of its population, shrinking from nine hundred and thirty-nine thousand residents to seven hundred and thirty-six thousand. The number of blacks has gone up by more than a third; the number of whites has gone down by more than half. A city that was almost two-thirds white in 1960 is now almost three-fifths black; it also has a growing Asian population, which makes up about two per cent of the total. Another change: for the last ten years, Baltimore has been immensely popular around the world as a can-do, comeback city. For instance, waterfront construction projects from the nineteen-seventies, most of them financed by federal programs that no longer exist, have inspired many imitators. "Buffalo is always sending delegations to Baltimore," a friend of mine who lives in that Northern city tells me. "Their only purpose is to report back on 'Why can't we be more like Baltimore?' " Osaka, an industrial city that visitors to Japan generally avoid, has just opened an aquarium even bigger than the National Aquarium in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, the city's revitalized downtown waterfront area. And Camden, one of New Jersey's poorest cities, is building a state aquarium, a marina, a park, a public promenade, and an office building on its waterfront to show the whole country that Camden, having learned from Baltimore, is on the way back up.

Some of the changes that are occurring in Baltimore, and in almost every other town and every county in the country, have to do with long-term national trends that probably don't feel real yet to millions of Americans. One is the "browning of America," a population projection estimating that sixty-five years from now, just after the middle of the new century, the average American resident will not be white—a state of affairs that has not existed for a few hundred years, or since the European settlers here began to outnumber the Native Americans. Other changes in Baltimore life—more teenage pregnancies, a higher crime rate, a shrinking tax base—have to do with more recent national trends, among them the sense of inner-city, outer-city polarization that intensified throughout the nineteen-eighties, as more and more money shifted into the hands of people who were already doing well, and as more and more people with good incomes moved farther and farther away from people with next to nothing.

There are also in Baltimore these days the first signs of some locally generated changes that, if they succeed, could help give us a new standard for measuring successful cities. Universal literacy is now a major goal in Baltimore. Mayor Schmoke, who hands out gray bookmarks with yellow tassels on his walking tours around town, has given Baltimore, which has been known at various times as the Monumental City, Mobtown, Nickel City, Charm City, and the Renaissance City, an official new nickname: the City That Reads. And the city seems to be setting other new goals as well. One is to make a "realistic hope" for a full life, as Michael Olesker, a columnist for the Baltimore *Sun*, puts it, part of the birthright of every Baltimorean; the phrase occurs in a piece Olesker wrote last summer about information that had just been released by the Congressional Budget Office and "that says in the bluntest language that we're increasingly becoming a nation of haves and have-nots." At least since the time of H. L. Mencken, Baltimore newspaper columnists have been roaming Baltimore neighborhoods in search of the truth about the city, and Olesker's report on income polarization—headlined "SIGNS OF THE TIMES POINT TO WIDENING GAP OF RICH, POOR"—centered on a morning he had just spent talking the idea through with people over in southwest Baltimore, near the Hollins Street Market, which is one of half a dozen eighteenth- and nineteenth-century indoor public markets the city still owns and operates.

"The City Markets are Baltimore's oldest institution, older even than its health department, older than the Mayor's office," Richard P. Davis, Baltimore's Director of Markets, has written. The Municipal Markets Administration rents out stalls to local butchers, bakers, and produce merchants; to oyster, crab, and fish merchants; and to florists, candymakers, and fast-food venders. Many of the stall holders are carrying on businesses launched by their parents or grandparents—in some cases, by their great-great-grandparents—and the markets themselves, according to many Baltimoreans I've talked to, are places that act to knit city residents together in ways that can create neighborliness and retard the urge to drift off into the suburbs. The Hollins Street Market, a cheerfully noisy, echoing room a block long, with a center aisle and a stamped-tin ceiling, is for its regulars like a whole village under a single roof, according to a recent customer survey called "Human and Environmental Factors in Market Use," by John Papagni, an economic-development planner who studies human behavior and the physical environment in Baltimore.

The Hollins Street Market is also the hub of a neighborhood commercial district. It's in a racially mixed area of old row houses which provides housing both for longtime residents and for college students, and it's close to Little Lithuania, a white middle-class area,



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As soon as the old man knew he was actually dying, even before anyone else would admit it,
he wanted out of the business, out of the miserable game, and he told whoever would listen,
whenever they'd listen, wife, family, friends, that he'd do it himself but how could he,
without someone to help, unable to walk as he was, get out of bed or up from the toilet himself?

At first he'd almost been funny: "Somebody comes, somebody goes," he'd said on the birth of a niece,
and one day at lunch, "Please pass the cream cheese," then, deadpan, "That's all I'll miss."
But now he's obsessed: "Why won't you help me?" he says to his children ten times a day,
a hundred and ten, but what if such meddling's wrong, and aren't these last days anyway precious?

Still, he was wearing them down: "This is no fun," he said to a son helping him hobble downstairs,
and the son, knowing full well what he meant, dreading to hear what he meant, had to ask "What?"
so the old man, the biopsy incision still lumping the stubble of hair on the side of his skull,
could look in his eyes and say, if not as an accusation then nearly, "Death, dying: you know."

By then they knew, too, that sooner or later they'd have to give in, then sooner was over,
only later was looming, aphasic, raving too late, so they held council and argued it out,
and though his daughter with her strict religion was afraid, they decided to help him,
and told the old man, who said, "Finally, at last," and then to his daughter, "Don't be afraid."

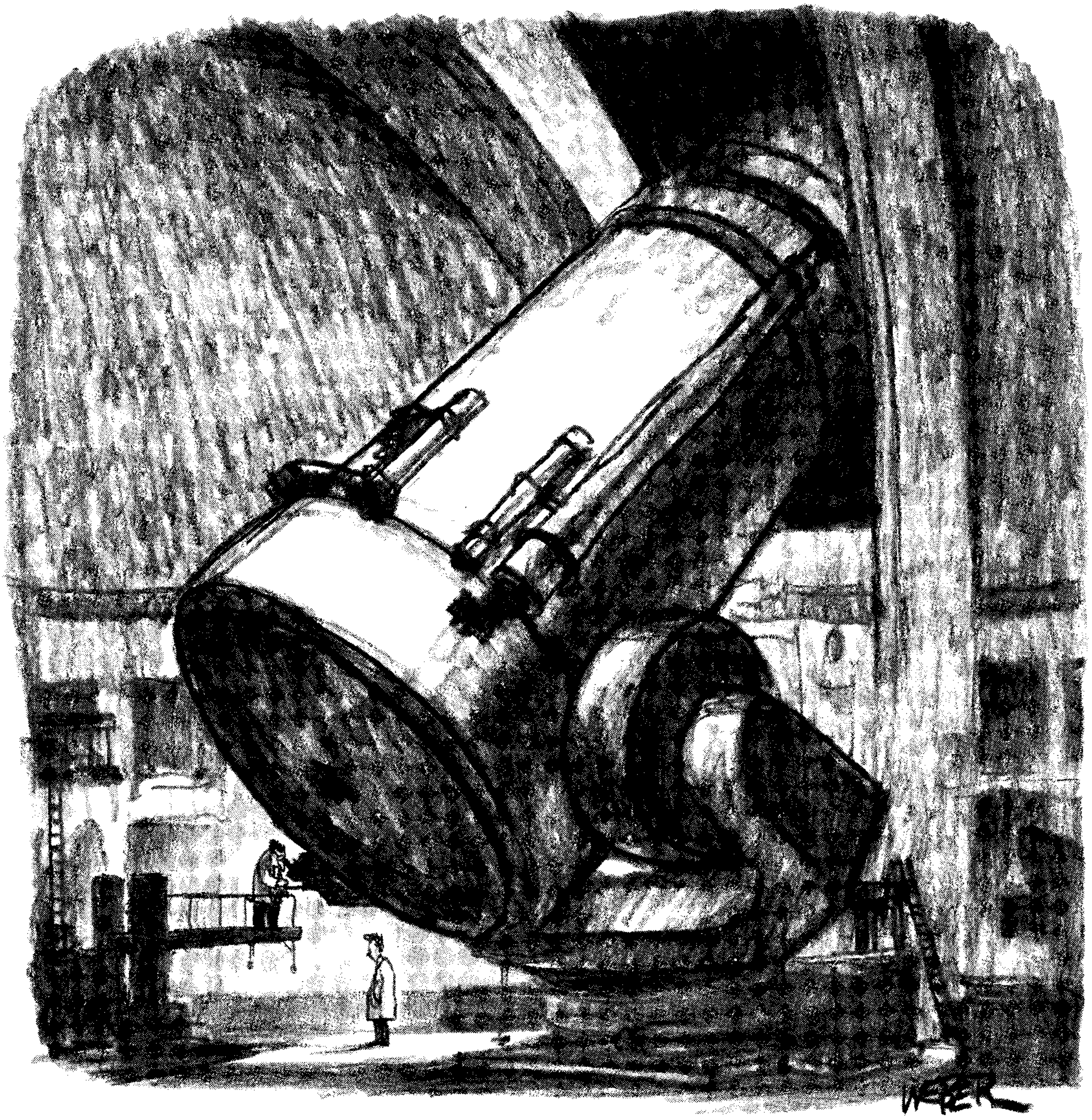
On the day it would happen, the old man would be funny again: wolfing down handfuls of pills,
"I know this'll upset my stomach," he'd say, but for now he only asks how it will happen.
"You'll just sleep," he's told, and "That's great" is his answer: "I haven't slept for a week."
Then "Great" again, then, serious, dry-eyed, to his crying family: "Just don't tell me when."

—C. K. WILLIAMS

and to Pigtown, a white working-class area, and to a largely black area dominated by high-rise public-housing projects—projects that in the mid-nineteen-eighties were notorious for a murder rate that at one point reached a killing a day. (A special police force has since restored some order to these buildings.) The Hollins Street Market is just over a mile southwest of the Lexington Market, the cavernous old downtown public market that most visitors to Baltimore get taken to—a place crammed with such an abundance of food that near the fish stalls you sometimes feel as if the whole Chesapeake Bay had rolled ashore only moments before to be stacked, sliced, shucked, steamed, and spiced and await consumption.

Across the street from the Hollins Street Market last summer, Michael Olesker saw a sign in a liquor-store window saying "PLAY THE LOTTERY" and, right next door, in an office window, a sign saying "FOOD STAMP CENTER HERE. COME IN WE'RE OPEN." He wrote of them, "This is America in the dying years of the 20th century: People getting in one line to keep their heads above water, and in another line to dream of hitting it big once." Olesker started talking to kids and to merchants about the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer as a result of Reagan Administration policies. "That's why they put all the lottery signs in this neighborhood," Katie O'Meara, a customer in a pâtisserie just across from the market, told him. "They make people think they've got a way out, when they don't." Ms. O'Meara also pointed out another easy way of evaluating the health of the Hollins Street Market area—counting the pay telephones in the Hollins Street Market neighborhood. Recently, she told Olesker, people she ran into had started buying lottery tickets with their grocery money. And now "a lot of people around here don't even have phones in their house," she said. "Look at all the phones on the street. That's because the phones are the first thing to go when money gets tight."

It was after this encounter that Olesker began to write about realistic hope: "A sense of realistic hope goes before the phones do. A sense of being included in the American mainstream goes, and a sense of bitterness comes in, and then a subculture of anger grows and takes on a life of its own." Realistic hope seems to be the kind of perception that affects several generations at the same time: Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, a pediatrician at Harvard Medical School, wrote recently that poor children almost immediately "sense the hopelessness in their parents and learn to fail." He went on to explain, "In our work at Children's Hospital in Boston, where I founded the Child Development Unit, we assess babies of all ages and from all sectors of society. By nine months of age, the babies who show signs that they expect to fail for the rest of their lives can be identified by various tests." The "lost children," he said, and children at risk of being lost constitute a "national emergency" that can be addressed only by multiplying many times over some existing successful early-intervention programs that



"See anything?"

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work to "enhance parents' desire to nurture their children."

TWO years ago, Mayor Schmoke caused something of a stir by suggesting that drug possession be decriminalized. His idea is not, of course, that taking drugs is a worthwhile activity but that drug addiction and the drug economy are major public-health problems that can't be solved just by jailing people. This country doesn't have the money or the manpower to lock up all the people who use drugs or sell drugs, he says, and we can help take away the craving for drugs only by spending the money we do have on providing people with a more nourishing substitute for drugs—the circumstances that will make well-spent lives possible. "Substance abuse is a disease," the Mayor said during an interview on ABC's "20/20" last summer. "And diseases are cured by health professionals, not by policemen." In 1989, nineteen thousand Baltimoreans were arrested on drug charges. There are thirty-five thousand narcotics addicts in Baltimore, and at present the city has enough money to treat just thirty-three people at one time in its drug-rehabilitation programs. "Our people are suffering, and suffering terribly. That's not what I want for this city," the Mayor told the ABC interviewer.

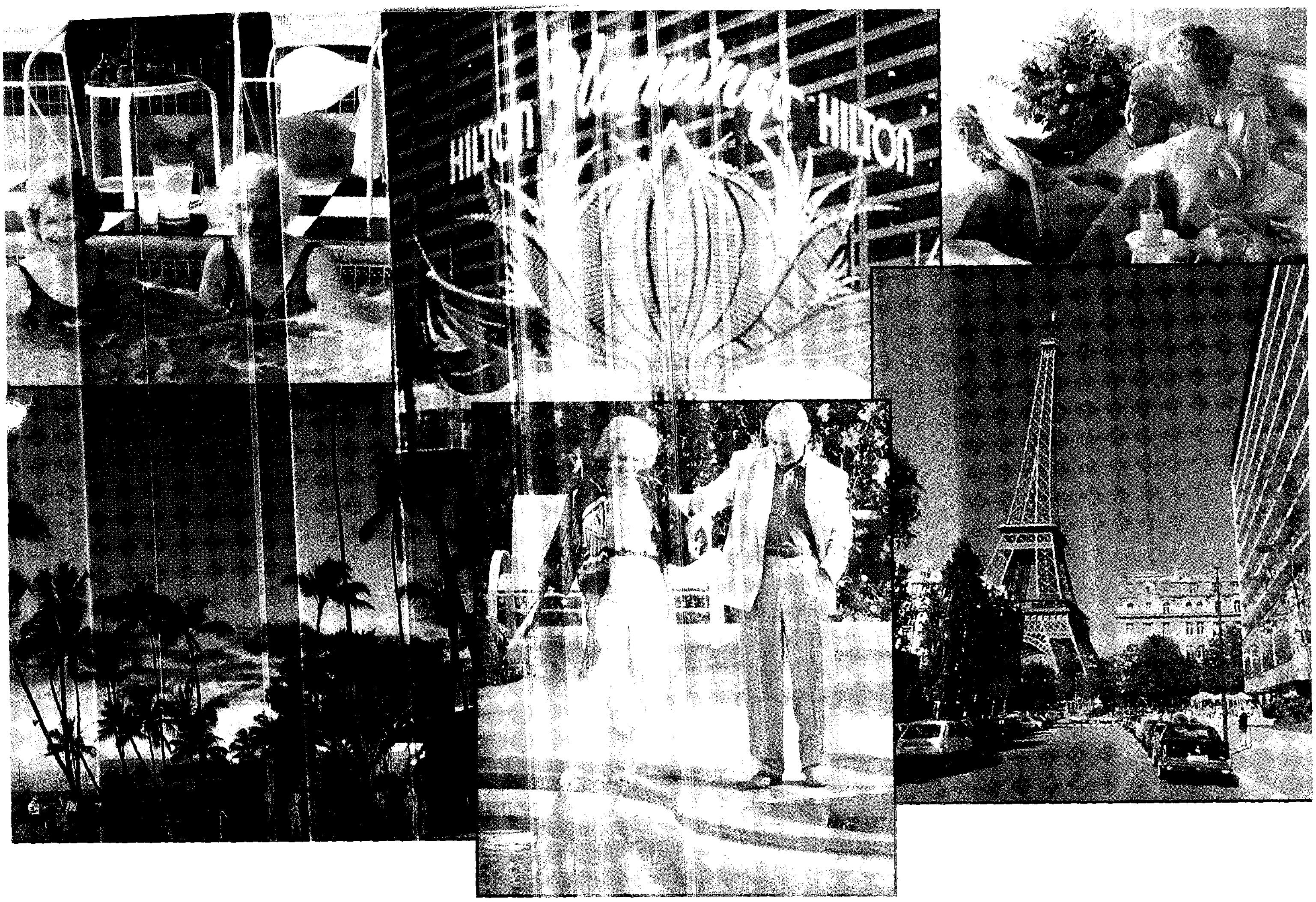
Some Americans around the country are beginning to articulate a belief that a livable multiracial city or a multiracial society is something we will achieve only when we start to treat racism itself as a dangerous public-health problem—one that stunts human development in America and also jeopardizes our economic security, because it contaminates our judgment. Some Baltimoreans I know who have been thinking about the issue are trying to prepare a strategy that splices people together in ways that simultaneously begin to blur the distinctions between "us" and "them" and between "here" and "there." It's an idea that, if it can be accomplished, might ultimately help to restrain one longtime American tendency that adds to racial tension—running away from people you don't like or are scared of. One program along these lines, Project RAISE—a program set up two years ago to make it possible for white middle-class Baltimoreans to help black sixth graders in inner-city primary schools keep their grades up as they move through the school system—has proved to be as nourishing for the white mentors involved as for the black kids who are starting to get better marks in their classes. It works by a process that might be called *cross-experiencing*.

One participant, a man in north Baltimore who has been paired with a girl from a school district in east Baltimore where there are no white students and almost nobody graduates from high school, told me last summer that what had happened to him was "one of the most rewarding experiences, if not *the* most rewarding experience, in my life." During the school year, he sees the girl once a week for an hour and a half, and she comes to his house to play with his children, and he has also arranged for her to be tutored two afternoons a week, and to go to art classes on Saturdays and to a computer camp in the summertime. "I'm very proud of her," he said. "And certainly, by the objective indicators, our work together has been a success. She never used to read a book, and now she goes out and buys eight or ten books at a time. She's an honor-roll student. But—much as I hate to admit it—although I was once a member of the city school board, until I took on this assignment I had never spent a day going to an inner-city school, and I didn't know anything about what kind of homework got assigned, or how papers were graded, or how the food in the lunchroom tasted."

For five years—ever since a local foundation published a report called "Baltimore 2000: A Choice of Futures," by Peter L. Szanton, a former associate director of the federal Office of Management and Budget, which warned the city about the seriousness of its economic and social problems—many Baltimoreans have taken on the task of outlining a program of realistic hope. "Preparing for Global and Regional Collaboration: A Strategic Assessment of the Baltimore Region for Improving the Quality of Life," a new study by the Baltimore Regional Council of Governments, focusses, according to Guy W. Hager, the executive director of the council, on the "growing and significant disparity between the economic and social condition of the city and the suburbs," which is "a greater disparity than other metropolitan areas have," he says, adding, "We trail behind most other metropolitan areas . . . from infant mortality to teen-age pregnancy to air quality." The solution, as Hager sees it, is "consolidation"—a functional merging of various city and suburban services, such as fire departments, police departments, and library systems, while political boundaries are left intact.

"Dr. Gachet, call your office."

Last summer, Philip Moeller, the business editor of the Baltimore *Sun*, devoted four consecutive weekly columns to the topic of "a new vision for Baltimore." The headline over the first column was "BEYOND CAMELOT," and in that column Moeller wrote, "Where are the new jewels that can shine like . . . the Inner Harbor? Where is the new program of work that can lift the city to new heights?" He concluded that the city's public-school system could become Baltimore's next large-scale reclamation project, its next Inner Harbor. "Many



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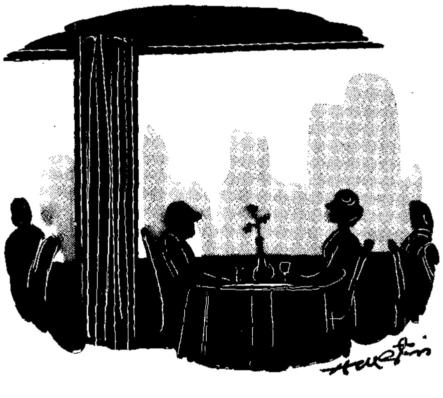
of us, perhaps too many, simply don't believe the public schools will ever get much better," he wrote, but "thirty-five years ago, few people in Baltimore believed the city could turn itself around" or change "the way we felt about the downtown and lots of other facets of Baltimore." Richard Bradley, who is the executive director of the International Downtown Association, an umbrella organization of downtown businessmen's groups, government agencies, and development corporations, reports that the Greater Baltimore Committee, Baltimore's own downtown group, which can claim much of the credit for the city's downtown and waterfront redevelopment, has lately been asking itself two urgent questions: "Have we already done as much as cities can do?" and "How do people learn from one another?"

Until recently, one sentence in "Baltimore 2000" seems to have lodged uppermost in the minds of many Baltimoreans: "There is rot beneath the glitter," Szanton wrote, quoting an anonymous informant. That evaluation echoed an even harsher comment from a Manchester *Guardian* reporter, who wrote in the early nineteen-eighties that Baltimore's Inner Harbor made him think of "gold fillings in a mouthful of decay." Now Szanton's words are being replaced by a new principle, suggested by Mayor Schmoke. Early last year, the Mayor, who is considered by many of his admirers to be an earnest speaker rather than a brilliant one, addressed the 2020 Vision Conference, a three-hour brainstorming session attended by three hundred leaders of the city from his own generation, and offered a new definition of realistic hope. He began by declaring that he was confident that Baltimore was "on the threshold of a beautiful spring," but then confessed that he often asked himself the same kinds of questions that emerge in Greater Baltimore Committee meetings: "How good are we at recognizing great change, great improvements in the human condition, when they're waiting just over the horizon?" He challenged his audience to make the next Baltimore "a reflection of the greatest dreams you hold for your children," because, he said, "after all, it's your future to build, but it's their future to live."

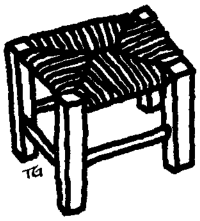
Schmoke said that in looking ahead to the year 2020 he hoped for "a vast East Coast regional economy" that would be "reinventing itself in ways that don't pollute," and would be a key competitor in the international marketplace, because it would educate all children on an equal basis and "refuse to allow poverty to be a barrier to opportunity." He spoke about race relations, about setting a new goal and a higher standard for the next Baltimore, so that it could take on a new quality. "We have more black professionals than ever before," he said. "That's good news. But Baltimore remains a city where the poor predominate, and blacks are disproportionately poor." As a result, he said, "no vision of 2020 is complete unless it includes the end of housing and employment discrimination." And then the Mayor talked about choosing "a city in grace"—his new standard, he said, for measuring the success of a place. "We can, if we choose, spend the next thirty years basking in the glow of what we've already accomplished," he went on. "We can, if we choose, spend the next thirty years turning spring into summer by duplicating the success of the Inner Harbor in our neighborhoods, schools, parks, and industrial sites. Or we can, if we choose, do something truly extraordinary over the next thirty years: duplicate our successes in the Inner Harbor, and once and for all let justice prevail by opening every door of opportunity to the weakest and most disadvantaged among us. That's not just a vision of a city: that's a vision of a city in grace."

BALTIMORE can easily be thought of as a Southern city in its climate and manners: Baltimoreans are likely to take the time not only to greet but to chat at some length with strangers who pop up in their lives. The air there feels soft and gentle on your skin; the summers are subtropical. In June, on open ground, there's a sharp, rich, enveloping smell, made up of honeysuckle and a dozen other flowering vines and shrubs. It's often a shock to visitors or conventioneers from the North or the West, who in the last ten years have been drawn to Baltimore because they've read glowing reports in the national press about the Inner Harbor, to find out, when they pick up a map, that Baltimore is actually about twenty miles farther north than Cape May, the old Victorian seaside resort at the southern tip of New Jersey. What may come as another surprise is that Baltimore, with its seven hundred and thirty-six thousand residents, ranks as the thirteenth-largest city in the United States. The city limits take in an area that measures about twelve miles from north to south and about ten miles from east to west, but many Baltimoreans feel that the city is wider than it is long, because there's a north-south expressway cutting through its heart, while getting from west Baltimore to east Baltimore involves a lot of driving through city streets.



Much of the southeastern part of the city is salt water; Baltimore is built along the shores of the Patapsco, a four-branched tidal river that, only a few miles southeast of the city line, opens out into Chesapeake Bay. The river cuts across many of the city's north-south streets, and isolates south Baltimore, a peninsula between two branches of the river. The city line, in wrapping itself around the harbor, creates an arbitrary shape that few Baltimoreans ever seem to have fixed firmly in their heads; it looks a little like home plate on a baseball diamond with a smaller home plate stuck on along the lower-right-hand edge. Baltimore is also the hub of a region—or "commuter shed," as regional planners would call it—made up of five nearby counties, once rural, where suburban office buildings, light-industrial parks, shopping malls, widened highways, and residential subdivisions are in many areas rapidly displacing what farmland and woods remain. Demographers think of Baltimore as part of Boswash—the complex of older industrial cities stretching along some four hundred and fifty miles of Eastern Seaboard between Boston and Washington. Growth patterns in the nineteen-eighties extended its length in both directions by almost three hundred miles, and some experts on Eastern regional growth are suggesting Norport as a new name for the great Eastern Seaboard conurbation, because it now seems to reach all the way from Norfolk, Virginia, up to Portland, Maine—a distance of about seven hundred and twenty-five miles.

The 1990 census has already recognized one new entity within Norport: B.W.—or Baltington, as it might be called. Washington's suburbs are expanding to the north and the northeast through Maryland even more rapidly than Baltimore's suburbs are pushing out to the south and the southeast. This year, Montgomery County, Maryland, one of the Washington-suburb counties, has just displaced the city of Baltimore as the most populous jurisdiction in the state, and it is widely predicted that the Census Bureau will soon announce that for statistical purposes the two cities and the land between them constitute a single metropolitan area. Few Baltimoreans and equally few people in the District, the name Washingtonians often give to their city, spend much time thinking about the non-identical twin city that's now almost next door. Still, some Baltimore businessmen are talking about putting together a campaign to persuade at least one of the major government agencies that are outgrowing their space in Washington and don't need to be three minutes away from either the White House or the Supreme Court—maybe the Food and Drug Administration, or the Patent Office, or Resolution Trust, the new bureau set up to deal with the savings-and-loan crisis—to relocate in what these people are calling "the second federal city."



There has also been interest in moves in the other direction. Some years back, a group of Washington businessmen lured Baltimore's professional-basketball team, the Bullets, down to a new stadium in Landover, Maryland, a Washington suburb three miles northeast of the District line. The Baltimore Orioles' home games now draw a sizable number of fans from Washington; driving eighty miles round trip to see a baseball game makes sense to many people in the capital, which has had no major-league team of its own since the Senators left for Texas, in 1972. "The view of Baltimore from Washington has long been clouded by class bias, civic prudery, and other myopias," Grady Clay, the dean of American planning writers, wrote back in 1982. Clay, a veteran of Washington-revitalization efforts in the nineteen-sixties, remembers all the jokes he heard then about "Baltimore being 'Washington's industrial suburb.' " But some older Washingtonians hold on to memories of how, in the nineteen-forties and fifties, they took the train over to Baltimore to shop for a good dress or a good coat at Hecht's or Hutzler's or Hochschild, Kohn or Stewart & Company—four downtown department stores that have all departed for the suburbs in the last fifteen years or gone out of business. These Washingtonians have always maintained that, despite a tremendous mid-rise-office-building boom in the nineteen-seventies and eighties, Washington is still only an overgrown small town, while Baltimore became a real city in the late nineteenth century, when it created a downtown shopping-and-theatre district and began to lay out a series of large pastoral parks, whose woods and rolling meadows have the kind of expansiveness found in New York's Central Park and Prospect Park.

One former New Yorker I've met in Baltimore is Ronald Hartman, the general manager of the Maryland Mass Transit Administration. He has worked in both Washington and Baltimore over the last fifteen years and has had no trouble adapting to the emerging reality of Baltingtton. Looking around at Baltimore's row houses, wharves, and old factories, he thinks of that city as an expanded version of Brooklyn, where he grew up, while Washington, self-absorbed as it is, seems closer in spirit to Manhattan. Ninety-three years ago, Manhattan and Brooklyn, now lashed together by bridges and subway tunnels, were separate cities along the Eastern Seaboard, and now the president of one Baltimore foundation is working hard to put together a public-private partnership that could construct a late-twentieth-century or early-twenty-first-century equivalent of a subway line: a silent, three-hundred-mile-an-hour magnetic-levitation train running between downtown Baltimore and downtown Washington, which could cut travel time between the two cities to fifteen minutes or less. Local boosters from the suburban counties near both cities are talking about developing what they call

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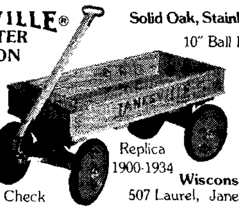

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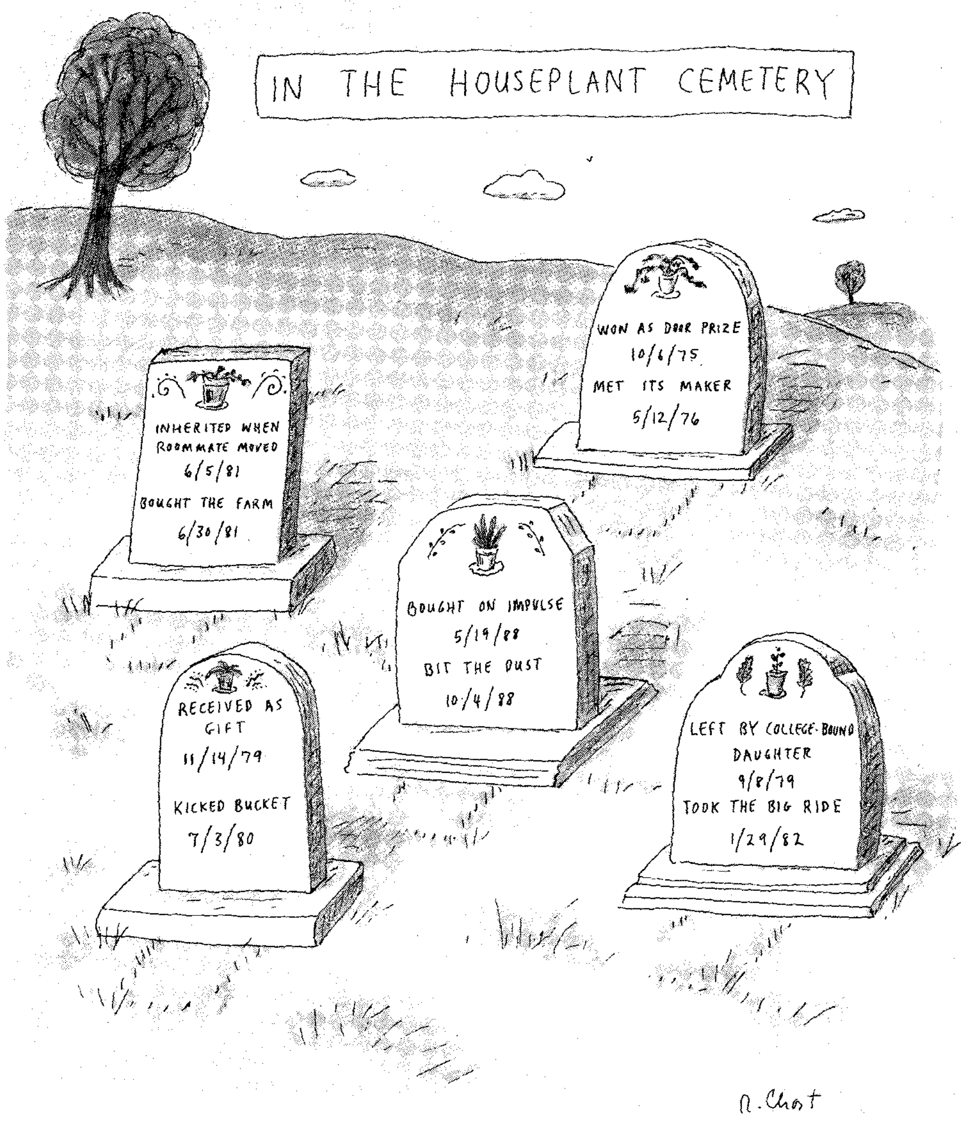
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R. Chast

the "Baltimore-Washington corridor" as a new East Coast high-tech center, specializing in biotechnology companies. But what shape can this still only tentatively linked, double-ended metropolitan region inside our Atlantic Coast megalopolis hope, ultimately, to take on? What kind of form could sustain this region over the next two or three generations, and nourish the people living there, while giving them a sense of themselves that they could pass on to ensuing generations of Americans?

Looking at nighttime satellite photographs of the East Coast suggests the possibility that Baltington, which has federally owned open space at its midpoint, could, if it were to start now, achieve a new kind of urban form with long-term staying power. (The use of such photographs as a planning tool has been promoted in this country by Philip Lewis, the former chairman of the Landscape Architecture Department of the University of Wisconsin in Madison: he looks at the glowing patterns made by city lights to find the outlines of constellations-in-formation that may coalesce a few years later into new regional supercities.) An irregular dark crescent between Baltimore and Washington where few lights, or none, shine by night is not much smaller than either of the two cities on either side of it. Even at first glance, this substantial piece of ground seems sizable enough to be a companion to cities, or their partner, and not just a buffer wedged in between them. Spread out a daytime satellite photograph next to a nighttime picture of this area, and you can see that the open space here is part woods, part fields, and part riverbank. Unfold a Maryland road map next to the two photographs, and you find that what you're looking at is an Army base (Fort Meade), a wildlife-research center, a national agricultural-research center, farmland, and some state parkland.

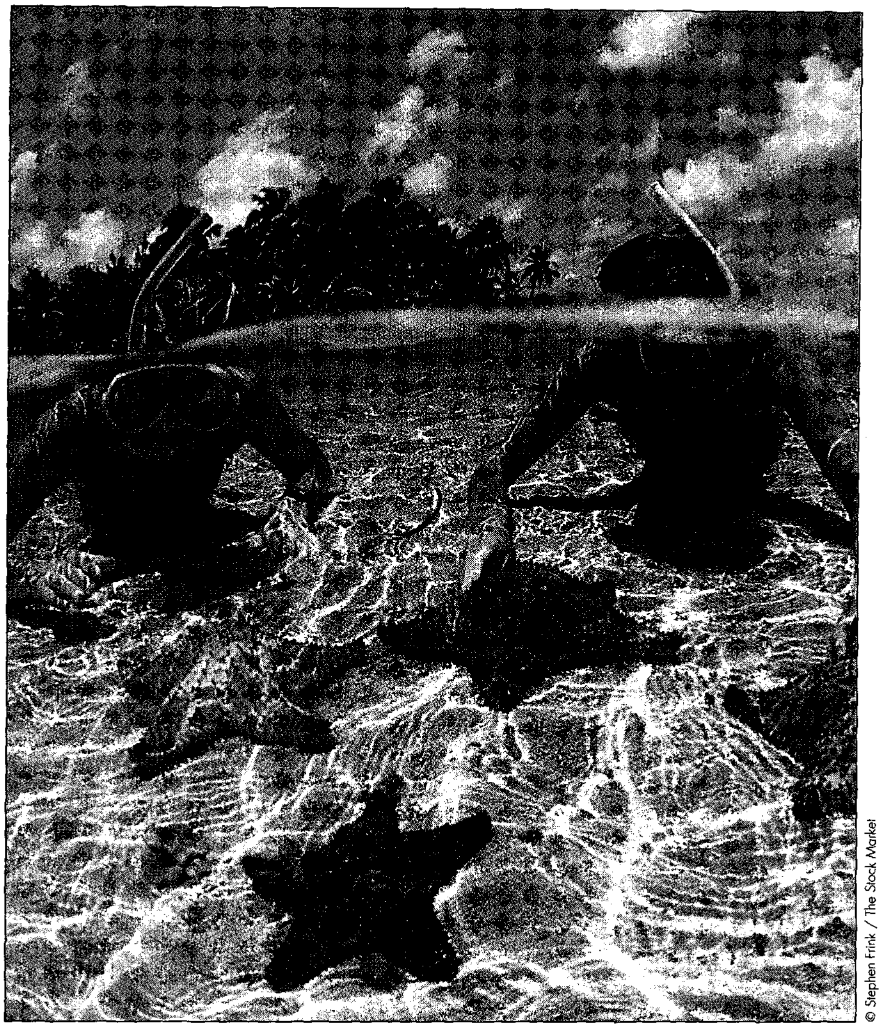
When a mixed landscape like this one, made up partly of wildlands and partly of working farms, is large enough and still mostly intact, it constitutes what some conservationists now think of as a megasite—an area with important natural qualities, such as wildlife habitats, a healthy forest community, species diversity, and clean water. All these qualities exist beyond just the narrower boundaries of the wilderness tracts within the area—chunks of land that by themselves may now be too small to protect some of the rarer and more vulnerable plants and animals native to the region. Instead, the natural qualities worth protecting are woven through the entire countryside, in a system supported in part by ponds and marshes and hedgerows and meadows on farms near the segments of wilder woodlands which remain.

Some Baltimoreans are now suggesting that if a megasite like the expanse of land between Baltimore and Washington were to be managed comprehensively, in a way that would give equal weight to its park values, including recreational opportunities, and to its biological values, its food-production values, and its development values, then this big terrain could become the twenty-first-century Central Park of Baltington—common ground where Baltimoreans and Washingtonians could meet one another and be reminded of their continuing kinship with nature. With a maglev-train line in place, the first American park designed to accommodate visiting city people, resident farming people, and resident wildlife, all at the same time, would be only seven or eight minutes away from each end of the expanded town. Similar parks already exist in England and France; the Chevreuse Natural Regional Park in Île-de-France, for instance, a high-speed-subway ride away from Paris and only a few miles southwest of Versailles, consists of small villages, privately owned farms, and a large national forest. In the Baltimore-Washington area, several first steps toward such a park are already in the works: the Army, as part of its cutback of facilities, now considers most of the nine thousand acres of Fort Meade to be surplus property, and Congress, at the urging of Maryland's delegation in the House of Representatives, voted last year to donate seventy-six hundred of

SPORTING VACATIONS

AN ISLAND-BY-ISLAND GUIDE TO RECREATION AND AMUSEMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE BAHAMAS

Illustrations by Heidi Stevens



© Stephen Frink / The Stock Market

Snorkelers enjoy some curious sights

SNORKELING AND DIVING ARE FAVORITE AVOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE ISLANDS

The main purpose in heading for one of those intriguing Caribbean islands, of course, is to soak up the sun and make full-length indentations on its white beaches, occasionally sampling the cooling restorative of the sea. But there also have to be other, more active, pursuits to keep the body from atrophying. Snorkeling and diving are favorite avocations throughout the islands, and facilities for scuba types are available almost everywhere. But there are other sporty distractions to try (or just look at) throughout the Bahamas and the Caribbean.

Anguilla, the British colony a twenty-minute ferry ride from the French side of Saint Martin, is very much a do-it-if-you-think-it's-worth-the-effort place; you can sail and snorkel at will from Anguilla's Shoal Bay, Barnes Bay, and Savannah Bay. At the end of April, **Antigua** hosts a week of intense competition among top international sailors. Even if you don't know a jib stay from a mizzenmast, you can join in the mandatory partying. Indeed, sailing is a year-round activity on the island; there is even a sailing school for beginners.

Off the coast of Venezuela lies **Aruba**, whose countryside away from its splendid beaches is still fairly wild territory, and a joy for hikers and rock-climbers. From the top of the rock formations (steps have been carved into the stone to ease the climb to the summit), you can see almost all of the island. On the north coast, make your way through the caves of Guadirikiri and Fontein and try to make sense of the hieroglyphics on the walls. (And if you'd like to imitate the contortive motions of the island's divi-divi trees — hunchbacked by the prevailing trade winds — you'll find a bowling center east of Oranjestad.)

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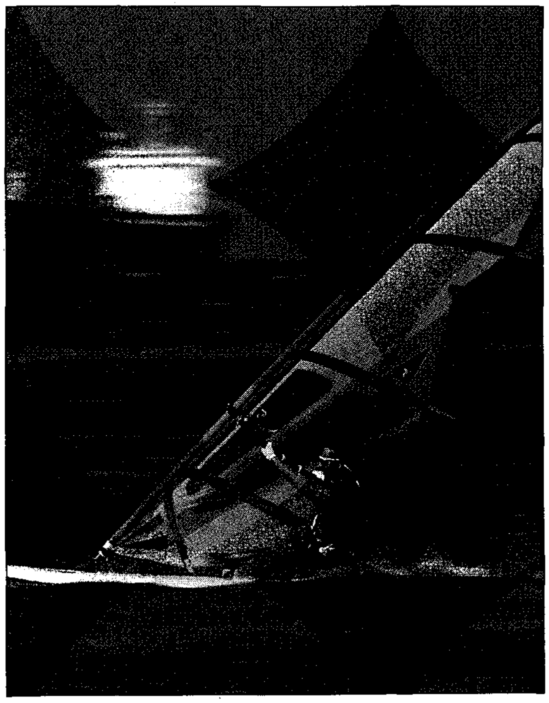
The islands of the **Bahamas** have a plethora of activities for energetic types. On Grand Bahama is one of the finest dive operations in the world, where you can *cavort with trained dolphins.* The same island boasts four excellent golf courses, and you'll find equally challenging courses on New Providence and on the outlying islands of Abaco (at Treasure Cay) and Eleuthera (near Rock Sound). But there are also the intriguing and, to many Americans, mystifying spectator sports of rugby (American football without the padding), soccer, and cricket (an esoteric encounter involving mid-ons, long legs, and third slips) to be seen at grounds in Nassau and Freeport.

Cricket, in fact, is the national sport of **Barbados**, and you'll find a match going on around every corner of the island. Many a Bajan has contributed to England's defeat at the hands of West Indian teams in test matches. If you're the jogging type, you might consider visiting the island in December and taking part in the twenty-six-mile marathon road race. Or, if your pace is more leisurely, take Sunday morning hikes through different areas of the island, led by young Bajans. You can also watch polo, enjoy horse racing at the Garrison Savannah, or saddle up for trail rides into the hills.

Bonaire, another of those Dutch islands off Venezuela, is a mecca for divers, and for a watertight reason: incredible reefs and underwater visibility up to a hundred feet. The Bonaire Marine Park has more than forty dive sites with stunning coral formations and exotic marine life. Or you can snorkel and dry off afterwards in the nude at the beach at Sorobon. Aboveground, hike into the 13,500-acre Washington Slagbaai National Park to birdwatch.

Sailing (and the attendant diving) is almost the exclusive recreation in the **British Virgin Islands**, and it's little wonder, since there are some thirty islands off which to drop anchor. Bareboat chartering (meaning you skipper your own yacht) out of Tortola and Virgin Gorda allows independent souls to pop into places like Norman Island (reputed locale of Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island"), Salt Island (where one can dive on the wreck of the RMS Rhone, which sank in 1867), and *Cane Garden Bay (where one can sample* a tot of rum at a centuries-old distillery).

The **Cayman Islands** bask in their reputation as one of the Caribbean's premier dive destinations — there are two dozen scuba operations on Grand Cayman alone — but there are also tennis courts along Seven Mile Beach. You can swing a club at a Jack Nicklaus–designed golf course, where the lightweight Cayman ball goes half the normal distance. Naturally, to soothe the sensibilities of the players, the course is also half the normal length. Snorkelers looking for some live action should head for Cayman Cay on Grand Cayman and commune with the denizens of Stingray City who flap their way in from the sea looking for fishy handouts.



Aruban breezes give windsurfers a boost

© Darell Jones / The Stock Market

After partaking of those multidish *rijstaffel* meals in **Curaçao**, you may want to run off the calories at the Rif Recreation Area's jogging track. You can go horseback *riding near Piscadera Bay or watch the* occasional soccer match at the Centro

Deportivo stadium. The Curaçaoan winds make sailing a pleasure, whether it's windsurfing or yachting. And there are plenty of tennis courts, an eighteen-hole golf course, and squash courts for the rigorously inclined.

The rugged, unspoiled island of **Dominica** has some of the highest mountains in the Caribbean, so there's plenty of hiking, and for the climber, the trek more than forty-seven hundred feet up Morne Diablotin is worthwhile.

Dominica's near-namesake, the **Dominican Republic**, which shares the island of Hispaniola with **Haiti**, is baseball-mad. During winter, many of their three hundred baseball players return from pitching and swinging in North America to play in the half-dozen ballparks scattered through the country. There's also superb tennis and golf for more participatory action. In Haiti, there's great diving off the island of Gonâve. And if you have time, go to Cap Haitien on the north coast and climb to the Citadelle, King Henri Christophe's bastion three thousand feet up in the mountains.

© Tom Bean / The Stock Market

Hikers make their way through Dominica's Valley of Desolation

The spice island of **Grenada** offers great hiking trails through the Grand Etang reserve; known as the gateway to the Grenadines, Grenada is also one of the Caribbean's foremost sailing areas.

One's motive in going to one of the Caribbean's French islands should not solely be to experience its gastronomic pleasures, though one can do that at the Cook's Festival each August in Pointe-à-Pitre, **Guadeloupe**. In addition to its cuisine, Guadeloupe offers an eighteen-hole golf course at Grande-Terre designed by Robert Trent Jones, excellent deep-sea fishing, hiking through tropical rain forests at Basse-Terre's Parc Naturel, and bicycling (there's a ten-day international Tour de la Guadeloupe held on the island every August).

Martinique also has a Robert Trent Jones golf course near Trois-Ilets, horseback riding along its beaches and on hillside routes, flying excursions out of Lamentin Airport, and for serious hikers there's the two-hour climb through thick foliage and overgrown trails, with guide, up Montagne Pelée. This is the volcano that erupted in 1902 and in three minutes wiped out the city and all of its thirty thousand inhabitants — well, all except one, who was incarcerated in the local jail at the time.

The beautiful waters off **Saint Barthélemy** entice the visitor into yachting, deep-sea fishing, diving, and windsurfing. The fourth French island, **Saint Martin**, fifteen miles from Saint Barts, can also offer you horseback rides over the hills to Anse Marcel, where you'll find one of the most

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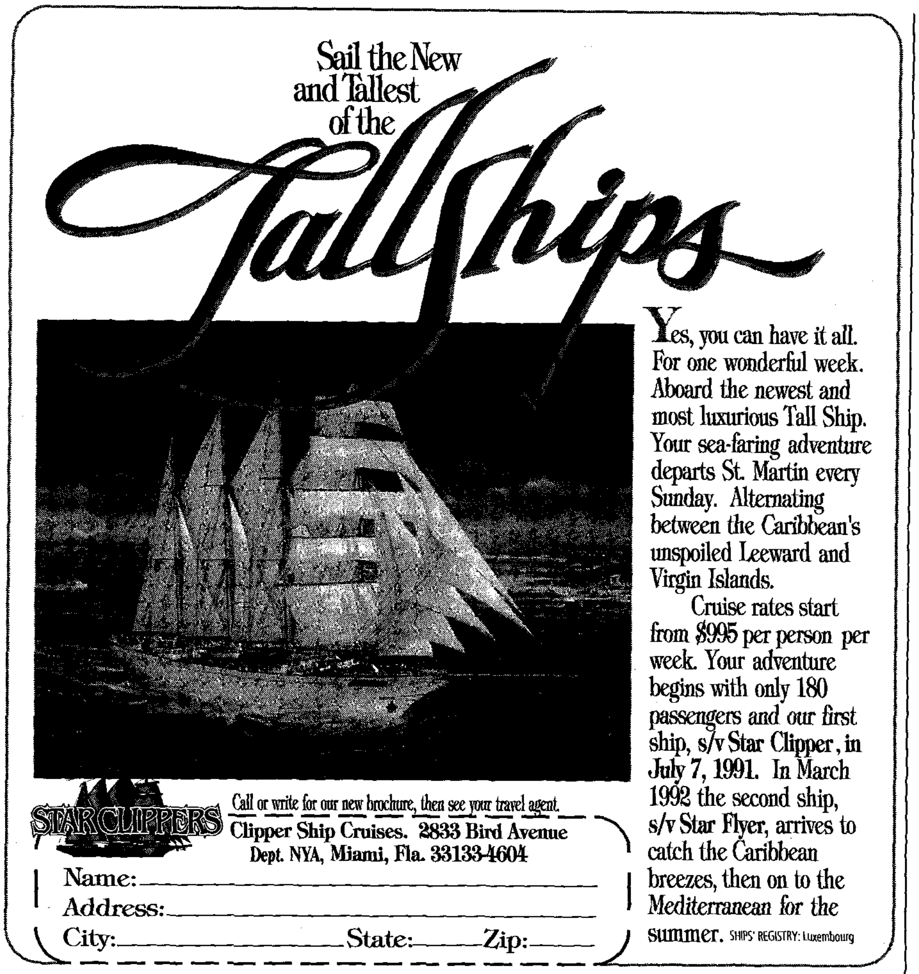
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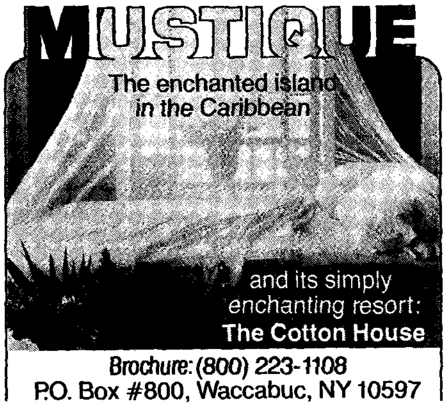
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unusual spectator experiences anywhere: falconry. Trained hooded peregrine falcons perform in the sky and make spectacular dives to earth. **Sint Maarten**, the Dutch side of the island, has everything the tennis buff could ask for; one resort alone has sixteen courts.

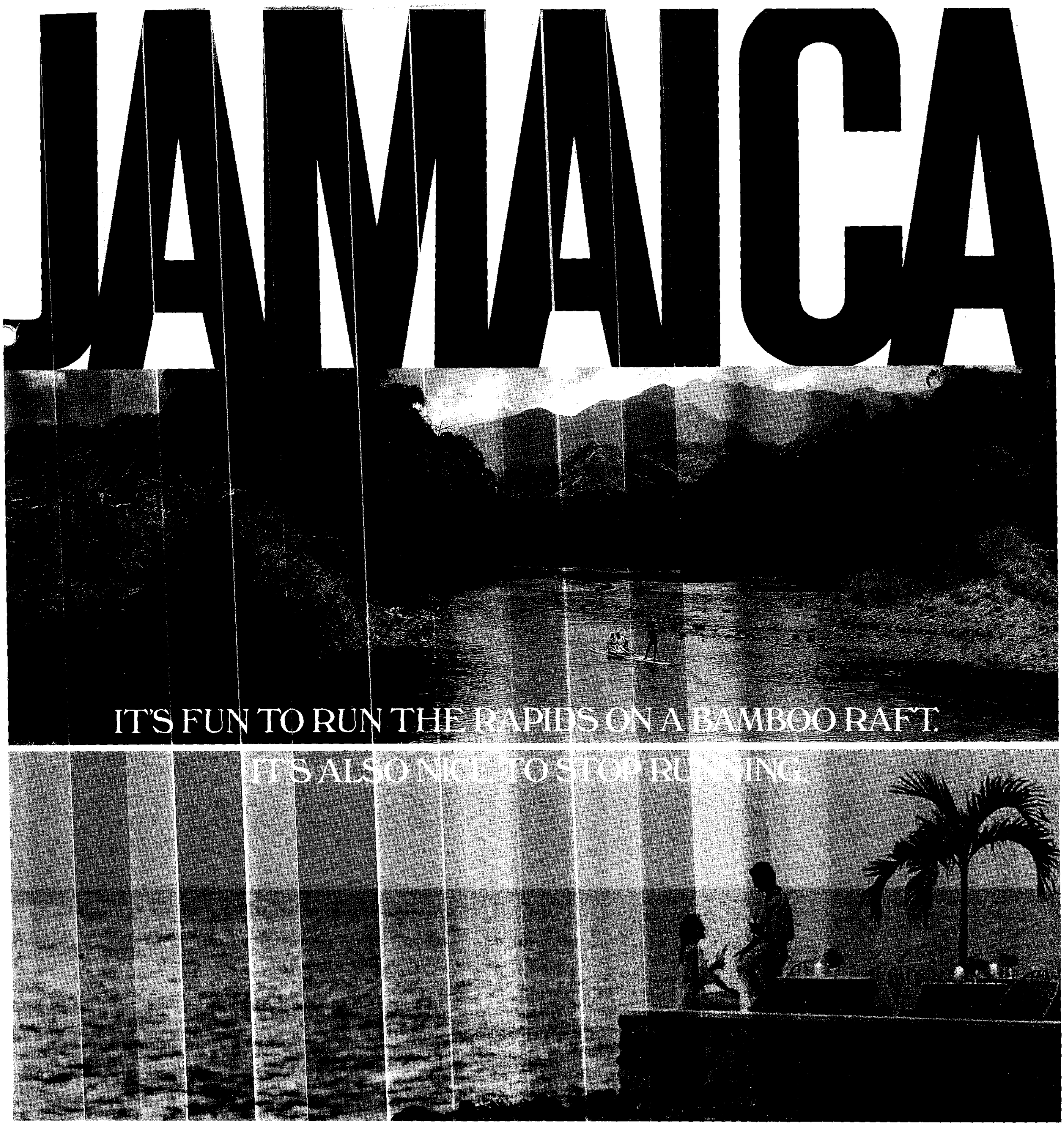
Remember the improbable spectacle of a bobsled team from **Jamaica** entering the Winter Olympics in Calgary a few years ago? An enterprising fellow named George Fitch fashioned a bobsled team from the winners of a popular Jamaican event called the Push Cart Derby, wherein young Jamaicans race in pushcarts down the hills around Kingston, the capital. Golfers will find a half-dozen of the finest courses on the island, and there's excellent deep-sea fishing out of Port Antonio and Ocho Rios.

Golf in the tropics is a delight

© Pedro Coll / The Stock Market

The British colony of **Montserrat** entices not only sun worshippers, but mountain climbers. The island has three mountain ranges; the highest point is Chance's Peak, 3002 feet up. There's cricket mania here, too; watch the bowlers try their googlies at Sturge Park.

Some twenty miles out of San Juan on the north coast of **Puerto Rico** is a swimmer's idea of heaven: a resort that boasts a 1776-foot-long freshwater swimming pool, the world's longest. There's good horseback riding in Humacao, or you can watch thoroughbred horse racing year-round at the track outside San Juan. This is also baseball country. North American players journey to Puerto Rico during the winter to play for one of the league's six teams. Hikers will be enthralled by the trails through El Yunque, a rain forest thirty miles outside San Juan.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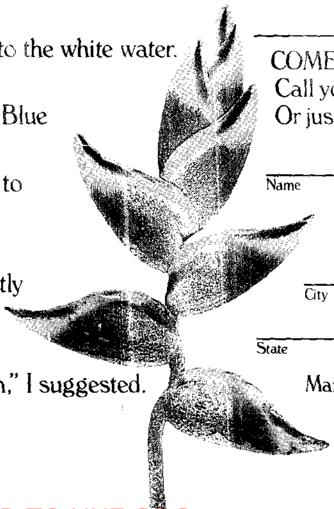
"Say Gregory," I called, "if we hurry do we have time to drive to Dunn's River Falls this afternoon?"

"Yah, mon," he answered, "but why hurry? This is Jamaica!"

That evening, as sunset purpled the sky, Karen and I sat quietly and listened to the waves washing the shore. I could feel myself getting in sync with their long, slow rhythm.

"Maybe tomorrow we could just sort of hang out on the beach," I suggested.

"Yah, mon," smiled Karen. "No problem."



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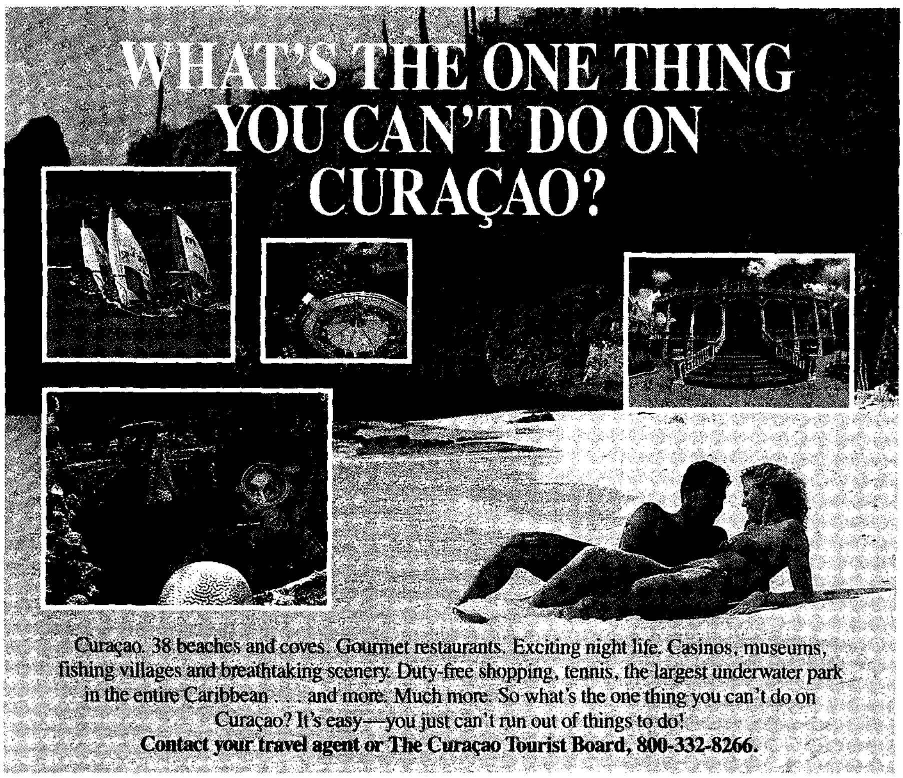

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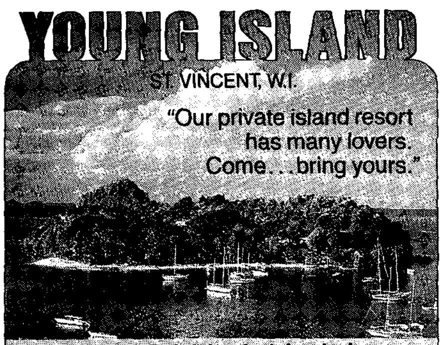

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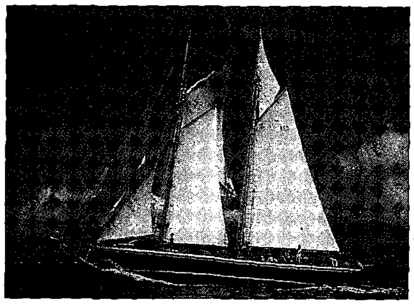
Saba is one of those little islands whose terrain just keeps going up and up to nearly three thousand feet, where stands Mount Scenery. You can climb there from the settlement of the Bottom, which is halfway to the top; 1060 carved steps lead you to the summit. Climbers visiting the Dutch island of **Sint Eustatius** (Statia to its friends) can tackle an extinct volcano known as the Quill; it is nearly two thousand feet high, and those who make it to the top can peer into a rain forest of rare orchids and tropical plants.

The twin islands of **Saint Kitts and Nevis** are politically linked, but when it comes to the national games of soccer and cricket, they're fierce rivals. They battle it out, at different times of the year, at Grove Park in Nevis and Warner Park in Saint Kitts. Again, climbing is the lure here — to the thirty-two-hundred-foot Nevis peak and the thirty-eight-hundred-foot Mount Liamuiga in Saint Kitts, part of which is done on horseback.

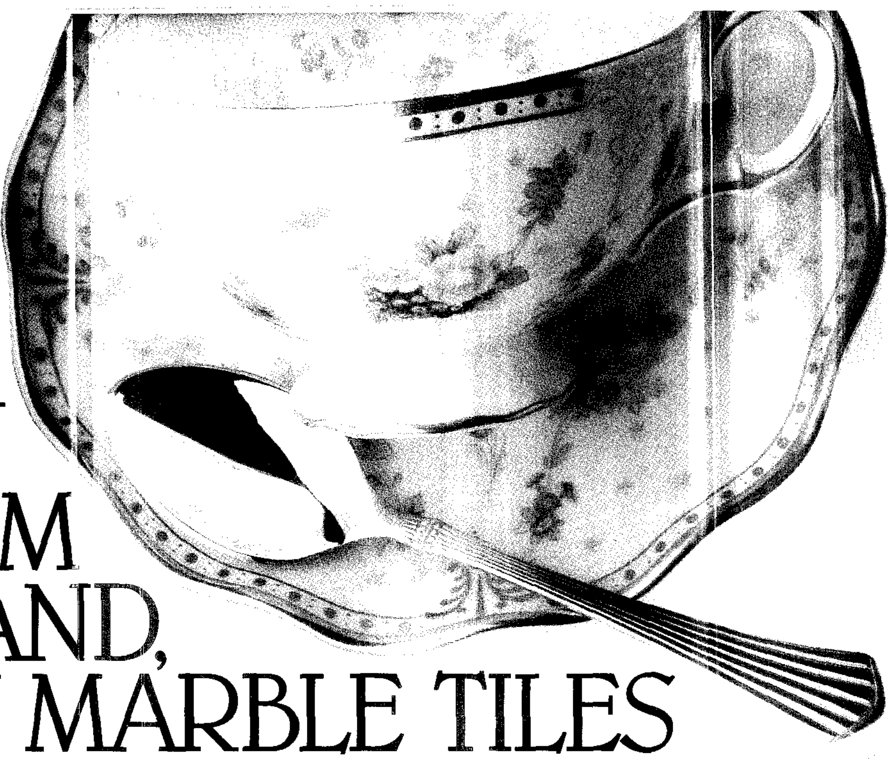


The Grenadines offer extraordinary sailing

© Bill Binzen / The Stock Market

You can also do a lot of tramping around **Saint Lucia**, the island dominated by the twin cone-like peaks of the Pitons (Gros and Petit). There are mountain trails all over; near Soufrière, which has a drive-in volcano and sulphur springs, is a large rain forest well worth exploring (but with a guide). There are two good golf courses, and the island's poshest resort has a fitness center. And there's the inevitable cricket and soccer at a park just outside Castries, the capital.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines among the last and least-trampled of the Caribbean islands that curve down towards South America, have mostly diving and superb sailing to offer the active tourist, though the climb up Saint Vincent's active volcano, the four-thousand-foot La Soufrière, can be a test of fortitude. **Trinidad and Tobago**, the closest islands to South America, have two excellent golf courses, one on each island. There are exquisite



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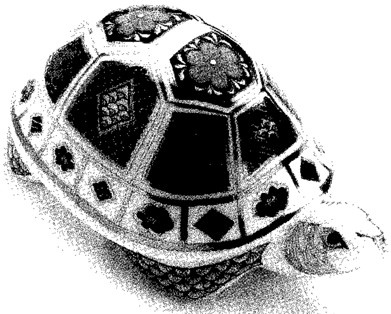

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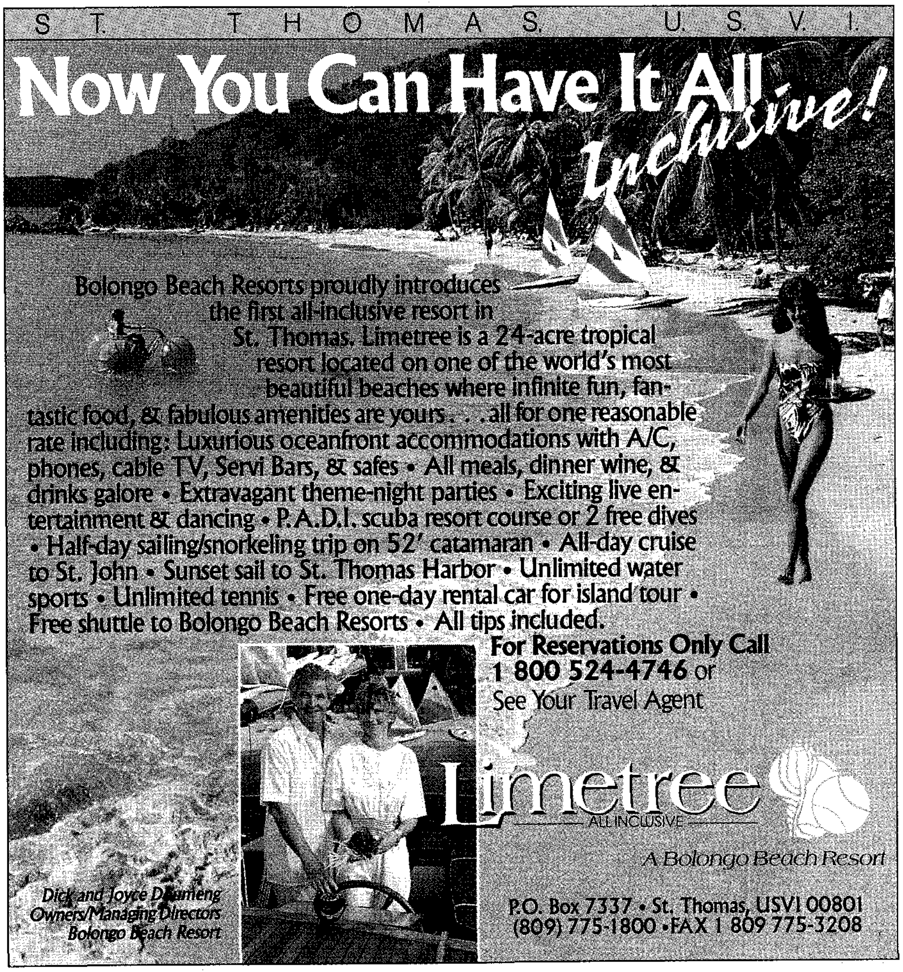

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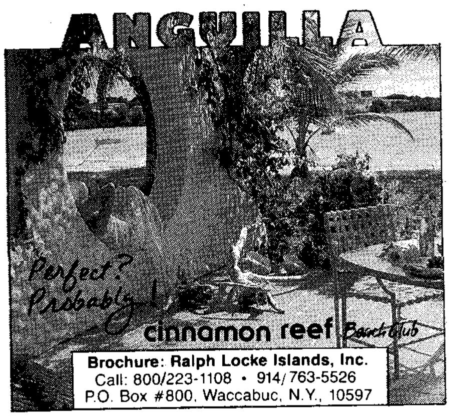

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hiking trails through Trinidad's Asa Wright Nature Center, a wonderland of exotic foliage and birds, and hikes through the rain forest can be arranged.

If you're not interested in worshipping the sun or exploring what lies under the surface of the waters of the **Turks and Caicos** islands, you will find little else to do; masks and fins are the standard dress there, though there are a dozen tennis courts at the few resorts, and you can rent bikes and tool around Providenciales (known familiarly as Provo).

For a truly sublime, get-away-from-it-all experience in the **U.S. Virgin Islands**, take the twenty-minute ferry ride from Red Hook at the east end of Saint Thomas, the main island, to Saint John, the littlest, check in at the campground on Cinnamon Bay, and spend days exploring the national park, which comprises two-thirds of the island. One of the best golf courses in the Caribbean can be found on Saint Thomas, and there's also a challenging course on the largest and most beautiful of the three islands, Saint Croix. The rolling countryside of Saint Croix is best appreciated atop a horse.

Horse and rider take a break in the U.S.V.I.

© Tom Martin / The Stock Market

Yachting, of course, is the most popular diversion in the Virgins, mostly out of Saint Thomas and Saint Croix. This is the place to charter your own yacht and take off for a week's meandering over blue-green waters, with stop-offs at dive sites and shallow bays. Incredibly, there are a hundred and twenty-five professionally crewed charter yachts for hire, with reassuring names like Tranquility, Serene, and Rhapsody. They range in size from thirty-five to over a hundred and fifty feet, capable of taking up to a dozen people. ◻

Ian Glass has written for *Travel & Leisure* and the New York *Times*, and is the author of "Fodor's Bahamas '91."

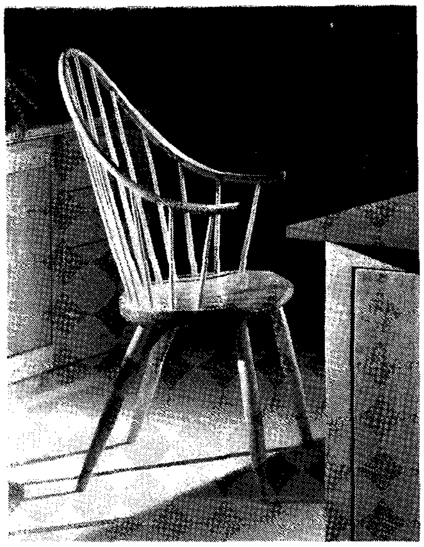
these acres to the wildlife-research center. And the University of Maryland would like to sell the development rights to its own research farm to the local county government, guaranteeing that nine hundred acres less than ten miles from Fort Meade would remain forever farmland.

One impending change to Baltimore and the region around it doesn't show up on any photographs that can be taken at the moment, by night or by day, from the ground or from space. Although the theory of global warming is still disputed by some climatologists, the sea level on the East Coast has been slowly rising throughout the last century, and if this trend accelerates in coming decades much of the flat, low-lying farmland on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, across Chesapeake Bay, where many Baltimoreans head on summer weekends, could be flooded. In Maryland, there is concern at the state level about how global warming may affect the health of the bay, which is the country's most productive estuary—a nursery for more than half the blue crabs sold in the United States. It is considered vulnerable to changing weather patterns, because, despite its giant size, it's not much deeper than a pond; the average depth is only twenty-three feet. Warmer winters, with less snowfall, might mean that the bay would get saltier, because it would no longer receive torrents of freshwater snowmelt each spring. What is feared is that these new conditions might prove unendurable to shellfish already threatened by pollutants that development throughout the bay's immense drainage basin keeps adding to the Chesapeake. This watershed spreads out across six states and covers sixty-four thousand square miles: rivers that rise near the Finger Lakes, in central New York state, more than three hundred miles north of Baltimore, flow south to meet in Chesapeake Bay with eastward-flowing rivers that started out in a corner of West Virginia, two hundred and fifty miles southwest of Baltimore. Preliminary global-warming studies modelling possible climate changes in Washington and New York talk about longer, hotter summers in those two cities, but effects that rising temperatures might soon start to have on life in Baltimore are not yet being comprehensively studied. Baltimore's air-quality problems, produced by cars and trucks and factories, get worse in the summer, and the city's air quality is already among the worst in the nation.

VISITING in Baltimore recently, I've found that Gibson's story has its place in a much longer story: the story about creating "the next Baltimore," as some people are starting to call it, or "a city in grace," as Mayor Schmoke calls it—the Baltimore that could exist thirty years from now. This story, which began in the mid-nineteen-fifties and is now maybe a little more than half told, involves large numbers of people eager to transform their city into a place without the repression and the estrangement that generate exiles. It's not at all clear yet whether this story can have a happy ending, but perhaps it can, if enough people keep wanting it to.

There are three great flowerings in the city's history—times when Baltimore took on new forms in order to be able to nurture people in new ways. One, still remembered by older Baltimoreans, needed eighty years of preparation and reached its long moment of completion during the decade of rebuilding that followed the Great Fire of 1904, which burned through a hundred and forty acres downtown, destroying more than thirteen hundred buildings. The second, locally called the renaissance, which took twenty-five years to bring about, came to national attention ten years ago, when two hundred thousand people turned up for the opening of Harborplace, the Rouse Company's festival marketplace at one corner of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The third is only now beginning to come into being and has no single location, but you can begin to see some of its outlines in roundabout ways: buying lunch in a city market; looking at 1904 maps of the city's park system; flying in a helicopter up one wooded river valley and down another; jolting down a ruined railroad track on a Hi-Railer, which is a specially equipped Chevy truck that can rise up on flanged steel railroad wheels and roll along a railroad track. And many Baltimoreans can tell visitors different parts of the story of Baltimore's latest flowering, at least the pieces that they know personally.

A good portion of Baltimore's sense of itself was distorted, diluted, and dispersed, after the Second World War, by Henry Barnes, a traffic engineer who was imported from Denver



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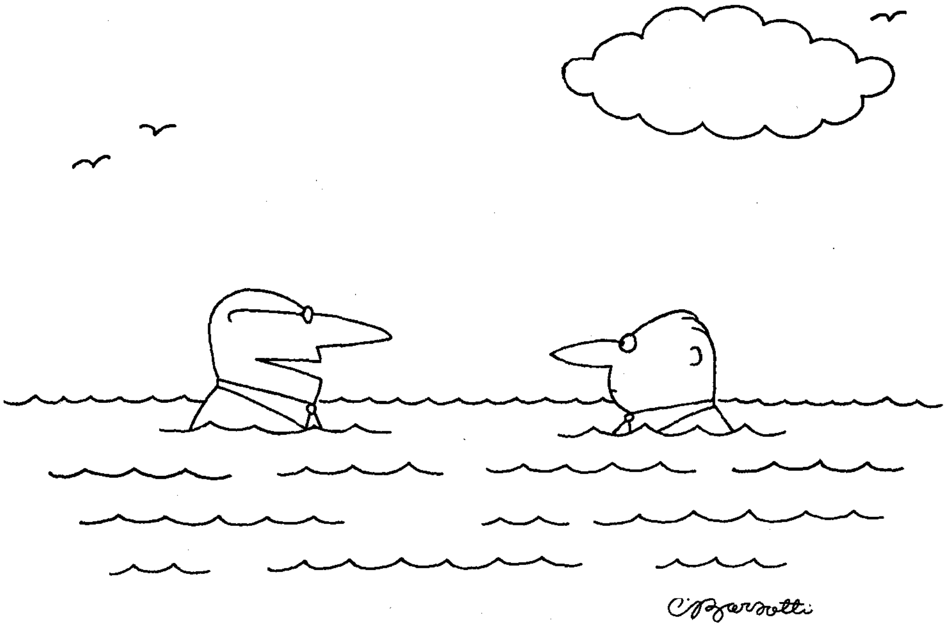


"There's no need for alarm—the staff will be reduced, but only by attrition."

• •

and later, with great fanfare, went on to New York. Baltimore became his showcase—the place where he made a national reputation. Barnes is sometimes thought of as the father of the one-way street, and at the time he arrived in Baltimore the setting up of one-way streets and its accompaniment, a retuned line of staggered stoplights that would change—or "break," as traffic engineers say—from green to red in a rolling wave instead of all at once, were thought of as city savers, capable of restoring bustle to the streets. Instead, over the years they have made pedestrians more fearful and drivers more impatient, and seem to have replaced liveliness with an inflexible kind of movement relentlessly keyed to a fixed, and therefore arbitrary, tempo.

Staggered lights on one-way streets make mini-expressways out of city streets—even in Baltimore, where many of the main north-south through streets are only four lanes wide. The traffic on some of the main streets—Charles, St. Paul, Calvert, Maryland—gathers itself together and moves in bursts, or pulses of speed, and these, as some of Henry Barnes' successors now acknowledge, soon begin to function as a kind of rhythmic beat that exerts an almost hypnotic effect on drivers. The bursts of traffic roar through a street much as a surging flow of rainwater after a storm floods through a stream and scours the stream banks. The long-term aftereffects of both kinds of scouring have a similar look: stream banks are undermined and start to cave in, and the urban fabric, even in densely settled areas, starts to unravel.

The bursts of traffic also have a direct impact on the behavior of pedestrians, channelling people so that they are more likely to confine themselves to one side of the street or the other. A double-parked truck can stymie the flow of traffic almost instantly, but when the streets are clear a pulse of traffic quickly builds up a momentum that seems so unstoppable that pedestrians don't just move more cautiously; part of their sense of co-ownership of the streets gets foreclosed. Quite narrow city streets, when you get ready to cross them, can seem to have suddenly become dangerously wider. And, standing on Charles Street, or another Baltimore street that has been one-way for the past thirty-five years, you never quite know when the next burst of cars and trucks will surge over the crest of the nearest hill.

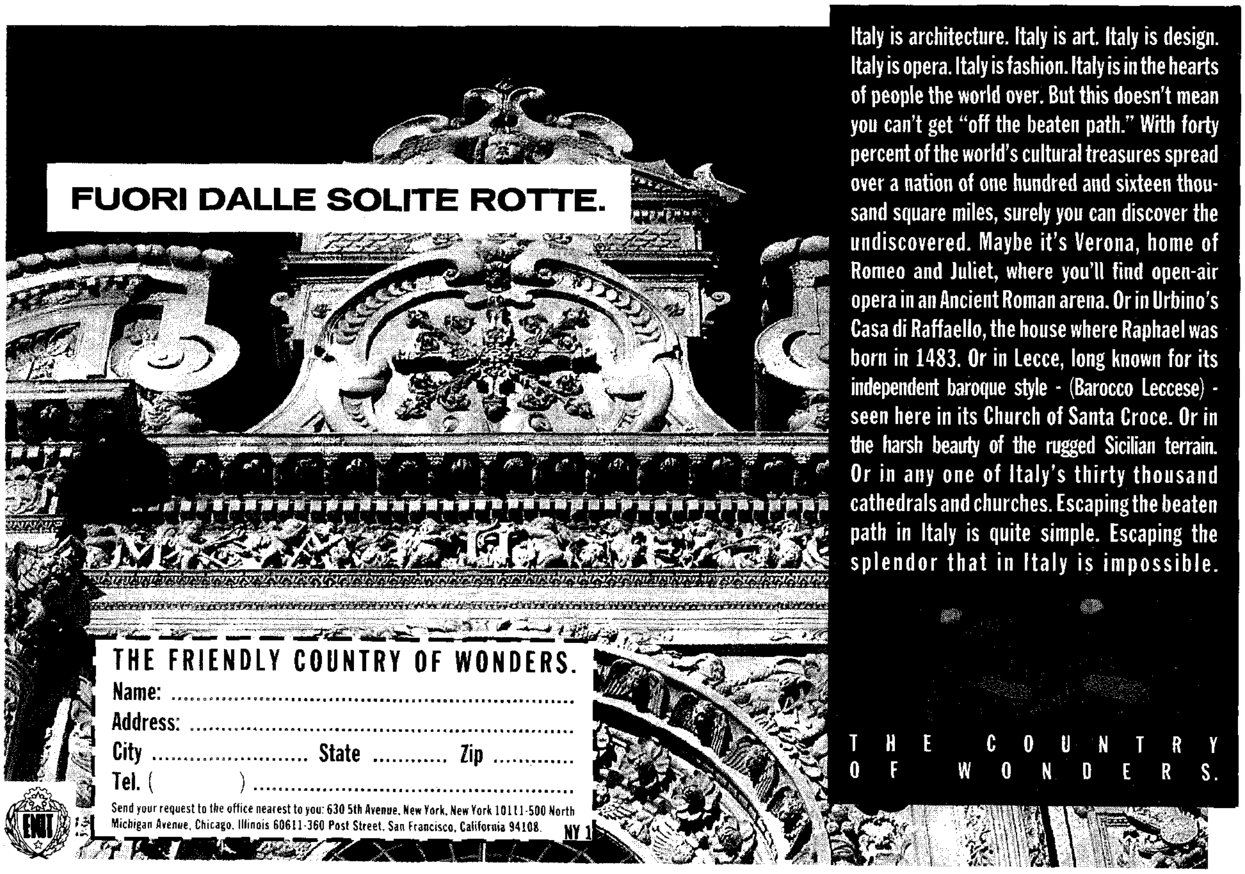
Edwin M. Kahoe, who was Henry Barnes' assistant in Baltimore, and later became head of operations for the Maryland Mass Transit Administration—he just retired—says that recent thinking increasingly considers the use of one-way streets an obsolete technique. "Baltimore has its Beltway now—a real expressway circling the outer edges of the city," he says. "And Washington has its own Beltway, so there are two loops of high-speed highway less than twenty miles apart. So many metropolitan areas now have these ring-road systems that we no longer have to look to city streets to help us speed up long-distance, through traffic—that was part of the rationale we used to justify one-way streets when they got started—and this means that streets can often go back to their original job of carrying local traffic. Many smaller cities are already reverting to older systems, such as setting all the traffic signals on north-south streets so that they break at the same time. When a street is made one-way, you, as a driver, stop looking at your surroundings, and you become impetuous. You just want to get through a place, and your uppermost aim is to stay even with the flow of traffic."

In the years since streets were made one-way, Baltimoreans' sense of the neighborhoods in the in-between areas that they drive through but don't park and walk around in has suffered. A Baltimorean I know who admires the dozens of blocks of well-built old town houses north of downtown has started talking seriously to people in the city's Traffic Department about restoring two-way traffic to the main streets in that area, as a way of attracting younger residents and newcomers to the city to a part of town that back before the First World War had been its most fashionable address. "At this point, people don't move to Baltimore just *because it's there*, the way they're attracted to San Francisco, say, or even Washington," he told me. "They come to Baltimore because they've found a job in the city. But once they arrive in the city they're not going to stay for any length of time unless they find a 'here' here that holds them. We have a mediocre climate and no mountains, and Chesapeake Bay is getting polluted, but we have a best card—our stock of old houses. That's what I kept telling the traffic engineer I've been talking to, and he kept telling me that I was talking about a 'dingy neighborhood.' That didn't stop until the day he finally parked his car and prowled around through the streets and alleys that I like. Now he could actually see himself moving into the area."

The other major postwar change in Baltimore that was designed to push more vehicles through the city streets at higher speeds wasn't Henry Barnes' idea—you could find the same thing in practically any American city. In 1963, all the streetcar lines in Baltimore—a system that at its peak boasted thirty-five lines, with four hundred and thirty-three miles of track and thirteen hundred trolley cars—were replaced by buses. Now, twenty-eight years after the last run of Baltimore's last trolley-car line, and a year before the inaugural run along a new, twenty-seven-mile light-rail line, it seems that the lingering effect on the city of scrapping the streetcars was every bit as negative as Henry Barnes' experiment with one-way streets, because it shut down some of the established links between Baltimore's neighborhoods; between those neighborhoods and the downtown center of the city; and between the city itself and what was then the countryside just beyond its borders—the longest of the old suburban routes having run east and then south from downtown, past giant steel mills, to reach an old Chesapeake Bay-side amusement park fifteen miles away. The removal of the trolleys also dismantled a unique municipal-financing mechanism: for many years, under the terms of its franchise, Baltimore's trolley-car-operating company had to set aside more than nine per cent of the revenues it took in to pay the Park Tax—a fund that the city used to buy parkland and to maintain the existing city parks.

Besides causing these disruptions, taking off the trolleys served to reinforce the isolation of the Baltimore hilltops. Old prints in the Maryland Historical Society show jagged cliffs and steep slopes in Baltimore. Those were long ago torn apart or smoothed away, but even today many of the city's most important and best-loved institutions can be found on what are still summits: the Basilica of the Assumption, the first Roman Catholic cathedral in this country, sits on a hill just north of downtown; the Johns Hopkins Hospital and Medical Center, now the city's largest employer, is up on a hill in east Baltimore; the Belvedere Hotel, the last of the city's grand old oversized hotels, which is still welcoming guests to huge suites, meticulously clean (each has a marble fireplace in the corner of one room, but the only picture on its walls might be a framed utility-company color photograph of a nuclear power plant in southern Maryland), is also at the top of a rise—this one two hills north of the Basilica.

Many of Baltimore's neighborhoods—Federal Hill, Windsor Hills, Ten Hills—are also centered on rising ground, and these hills, as a number of Baltimoreans will tell you, have helped give neighborhood identity a physical form but at the same time have worked to keep people from creating ties with adjacent communities; instead, each neighborhood tends to stay within the pull of the height it has already staked out. Two of the neighborhood hills—Federal Hill and a hill that was once known as Hampstead Hill and is now part of Patterson Park, a large park in east Baltimore—have a citywide resonance, however. In fact, when you listen to Baltimoreans tell their own stories and their family histories it's sometimes hard not to think that the continuity of the city, the pull of the place that has anchored generations of families to city life in Baltimore, and perhaps even a prosperous piece of the local economy as well, would be shat-



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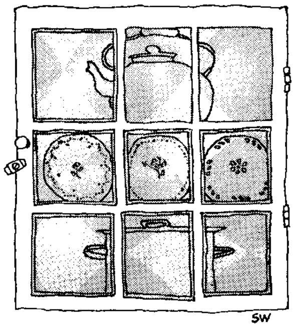
tered forever if either of these two hills should be levelled or hidden from sight behind a wall of high-rise towers. "Baltimore Today," a nineteen-sixties guidebook to the city by James F. Waesche, who was then the recreation editor of the Sunday *Sun*, informed anyone freshly arrived in the city that "the best place for visitors to get the 'feel' of Baltimore is atop Federal Hill," and present-day Baltimoreans who are showing friends from out of town the sights often make Federal Hill their first stop, because it's the one place where the whole story of Baltimore seems to have, right before your eyes, both an illustrious "Once upon a time" beginning and a shining and already achieved "They lived happily ever after" ending.



Federal Hill, a huge mass of red clay, now covered with grass, on the south side of the Inner Harbor, looks down across the water to Baltimore's great achievement of the nineteen-eighties—the waterfront redevelopment projects and the modern office buildings that are the ripe fruit of Baltimore's second flowering. Federal Hill has had its name for two hundred and two years. For a hundred and eighty years before that, it was known as John Smith's Hill, because it is one of the landmarks recorded in the journals of Captain John Smith, the man whose life Pocahontas saved; Smith, who was the first European to explore Chesapeake Bay, sailed up the Patapsco in 1608. The present name of the hill dates from December 22, 1788, a day of new beginnings—the day that four thousand Baltimoreans, almost half the population of the town, paraded through its streets to a picnic on the hill, with fireworks afterward, to celebrate Maryland's ratification of the American Constitution.

The Hampstead Hill story is the "Star-Spangled Banner" story seen from the land. For on the night of September 13, 1814, when Francis Scott Key was standing on the deck of a ship in Baltimore Harbor watching the British fleet shell Fort McHenry, in south Baltimore, the citizens of the city were turning back an invasion from the east by crack British troops—the same troops that had both defeated Napoleon in France and burned the Capitol in Washington. The British never made it into the city; they got only as far as Hampstead Hill, in east Baltimore. It had been heavily fortified by a locally organized general committee of vigilance and safety and was occupied by Baltimore riflemen willing to fire, as an English observer of the battle wrote, "old locks, pieces of broken muskets," and everything they could "cram into their guns." On the previous day, the twelfth, a Baltimore marksman had shot and killed the British commanding general. The British, under the command of a colonel instead, set up camp to the east of Hampstead Hill, expecting to attack, but in the middle of the night they heard from messengers that the fort in the harbor had not surrendered, and at that point they struck camp and retreated, through a rainstorm, to their ships. That night, Baltimore did what even the national capital couldn't do: it held firm. Baltimoreans today walk visitors to the top of Hampstead Hill to look down on the spot where the British turned tail, and a representation of the event is still printed on every official city document: the city seal shows the Battle Monument, which was built the following year in downtown Baltimore to commemorate the men—thirty-nine of them—who lost their lives defending the city.

If you look only at the foreground of the Inner Harbor—the reclaimed waterfront area that the tourists saunter through, or bob about next to in a fleet of miniature foot-propelled paddleboats—it can seem a diminutive place: nothing more than a reflecting-pool-size expanse of harbor water, less toxic than it used to be and no longer smelling, in Mencken's words, "like a million polecats," framed by a promenade so short that it takes only ten minutes to walk from one end to the other; a few sparkling buildings; and one old wooden ship. Another illusion you may get is that it is somehow isolated from the city, even though the water's edge is open and entirely accessible; in fact, since there isn't even a low fence along the shoreline, you now often see on the promenade mothers walking their harnessed toddlers on leashes to keep them from tumbling into the water. In reality, there is a fence of sorts around the whole area, but it's a roaring-traffic fence and it's behind you, not in front of you. Years before any new buildings appeared around the Inner Harbor, both Pratt Street, the first east-west street between the harbor and downtown, and Light Street, the first north-south street between the city and the harbor, were widened, and the result is that when you approach the Inner Harbor by land you feel as if you had to leap across a two-armed, right-angled expressway not much narrower than the waterfront itself in order to reach a precinct that wants to welcome you. And in the near future, as you can quite clearly make out by looking closely at architects' renderings for several mammoth new Inner Harbor projects which have been published in the *Sun* in the last few months, the Inner Harbor may start to seem even smaller, once a slablike new office tower rises just to the north and six twenty-to-thirty-story condominium towers crop up on the skyline just to the south. But even today the existing site seems almost too small a spot to have been able to carry aloft the spirits of a city—until, that is, you lift your eyes to take in the majesty of Federal Hill and remember the story that Baltimoreans have been telling one another about it for the last two centuries.

The Inner Harbor, however, has become a story in itself. It now exists as a tourist destination in the minds of people scattered about the globe who know very little about the rest of the city. And it has proved to be a magnet regionally as well, pulling Washingtonians and northern Virginians up to Baltimore for a day excursion or a weekend visit of what many District people think of as funky chic, meaning a trip that mixes shopping with a ballgame and a steamed-crab feast. The Inner Harbor has also become a kind of outdoor mall for teen-agers from Baltimore County, the affluent, white jurisdiction just beyond the city's borders; they hit town on Saturday nights to hang out at a cluster of bars and night spots in Fell's Point, the old waterfront neighborhood just east of the Inner Harbor. But for Baltimoreans part of what makes the Inner Harbor an achievement is its effect on the zone of confidence that envelops Federal Hill: it extends that zone outward to take in what had been a derelict area ever since the nineteen-fifties, when the old Chesapeake Bay steamboat companies, which once occupied the old docks in the Inner Harbor (then known as the Basin), tumbled headlong into bankruptcy.

South Baltimoreans who tell visitors the story of Baltimore's second flowering, the story of how this part of town and the way people think about it were transformed over a thirty-five-year period, often begin by saying that as children they were ordered not to go down to the docks, because their parents thought the waterfront was dangerous, and that if they defied the warnings and went down anyway all they ever found was emptiness and dead quiet—there was nothing to do. This story of the mending of the city started in the late nineteen-fifties, with the construction of Charles Center, a new office district downtown, where no major new buildings had gone up for twenty-five years, and was followed ten years later by reclamation of the Inner Harbor. Reporters from all over the country were sent to Baltimore over the past year, because 1990 was the tenth anniversary of the grand opening of Harborplace, the Rouse Company's two shopping pavilions in the Inner Harbor—a project so successful commercially that only two years after it opened it had generated thirty-eight hundred overwhelmingly favorable articles in the national press.

When the national press tells the Inner Harbor story, the Rouse Company is often featured as the hero, and the point of the story seems to be that cities need to find imaginative developers who can give them back their waterfronts. When you hear the same story locally, though, you find that there are many more lessons to be learned from it, and that the rebuilding of a city and its infrastructure of hope is a complex job, requiring complex skills. James Rouse, the founder of the Rouse Company, is given full credit by all for initiating the process of reconstruction downtown: back in the nineteen-fifties, Rouse, though he was then in the business of building suburban shopping centers, called together a group of downtown businessmen, told them he thought that downtown Baltimore was deteriorating, and got them started on a rebuilding plan. But it was not until almost twenty years later that the Rouse Company decided to invest its own money downtown and build an

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urban shopping center along the waterfront. Meanwhile, various Baltimoreans had set up local initiatives—a homesteading program that encouraged middle-class families to move back into the city and fix up inner-city row houses, for instance, and the City Fair, a gigantic multi-ethnic movable feast, like a dozen street fairs all in the same place, that pulled crowds back into areas that people had long since given up on—and other Baltimoreans had established new programs and agencies, which channelled two hundred million dollars of public money into Baltimore's rebuilding efforts, two-thirds of it from the federal government. Some Baltimoreans say they've learned from all this that when even a few city dwellers get together they have a chance to change their city. Others are convinced that you can't get far without huge amounts of tax money to invest in a place. But still others I've been talking to have hooked together in their heads the downtown story and the waterfront story and the old Federal Hill story with the Hampstead Hill story, which has also been handed down in Baltimore families and taught in Baltimore classrooms, and what they say is that the city has now done enough preliminary work to make it possible to think about banding together to rebuild an entire city all at once.

STILL-LIFE ON A MATCHBOX LID

The heart is colder than the eye is.
The watchers, the holy ones,
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A single dog hair can split the wind.

If you want great tranquillity,
it's hard work and a long walk.
Don't brood on the past.
The word is without appendages,
no message, no name.

—Charles Wright

• •

SOME of Baltimore's neighborhood hills have always retained the look of independent villages: you can be driving along a street of red brick or FormStone row houses with white marble stoops (FormStone, which was all the rage in some parts of the city in the nineteen-forties and fifties, is a gray cement frosting that is slathered over red brick façades and then etched and molded by hand to look like a solid wall of small, rough-hewn, rectangular rocks) and go around a bend and head up a rise, and suddenly all you see around you is spreading shade trees, a couple of farmhouses, and a dozen big old wooden houses with wide front porches. Some people refer to this effect—rather grandly—as "the quilt of the city"; others say that it reflects "the general underlying choppiness of Baltimore."

For me, it is always haunting: it isn't just a sense that at unexpected or unpredictable moments you can step back and forth in time, or in and out of the city, although there are deeply foggy summer nights in Baltimore that seem to swallow up all the sounds for miles around when you feel you really are doing that. It happened that I took a wrong turn late on such a night and found myself driving along a winding road, empty of all other cars, that led through Dickeyville, an old millworkers' community on the western edge of the city, and suddenly I caught glimpses through the mist, as my headlights rolled over them, of the sides or corners of three or four diminutive white clapboard cottages with black shutters, and just after that, in a side glance, I saw the swaying outline of a tall clump of hollyhocks and the gleaming yellow eyes of a cat out hunting in a deep back garden bordered by a freshly painted white picket fence.

But that was just one night. Driving through and walking around Baltimore has left me with a much more unsettling sense than the Brigadoon-like experience of coming upon a small country village where by rights there shouldn't be one. What has happened is that my whole sense of what "by rights" means has gradually been undermined—or, at least, redefined. Many features of what you might at first take to be "old Baltimore"—enormous dilapidated factories in south and east Baltimore, and, in north Baltimore, Guilford's "single-family detached mansions," as they're sometimes called, and the carefully trimmed, rolling lawns of the Johns Hopkins University Homewood campus—are in fact relative newcomers to the city. The two great periods of industrial expansion in Baltimore came during the two world wars, and Guilford and the Hopkins campus, both of which have such a long-settled look, are also twentieth-century undertakings; Guilford dates back only to the nineteen-twenties. One friend of mine, a filmmaker with a great love for cities, told me last spring, after she heard that I was going to be spending time in Baltimore, that I should keep my eye out for secret places there. When I asked her if she meant hidden places, she said no—she meant unexplored places, which most Baltimoreans didn't go to or notice or think about, and also places that had unexpected staying power.

Baltimore is a young city for a part of the world where many settlements reach back to the seventeenth century; Though it was founded in the early years of the eighteenth century, its first spurt of growth didn't begin until during and just after the Revolutionary War. Many of the oldest features of modern Baltimore—among them the roads, the railroads, and the markets—relate to its origins as a frontier outpost where food and goods could be processed and transshipped. These features may in time prove to be impermanent, but several of them still seem, like the hills of the city, to have within them a capacity for shaping the city's thinking. There are arbitrary elements in the oldest Baltimore patterns. For instance, the geographical placement of the city—along the shores of the northwest branch, known locally as the first branch, of the Patapsco River—is a mistake. The Colonial commissioners who laid out the first lots for a town, in 1729, thought of the drier, less marshy banks of the middle, or second, branch of the river as a far more suitable location for a settlement, but the principal landowner on the middle branch, an English merchant, refused to part with any of his property, because he thought there might be iron ore in the ground. The first municipal market was organized in 1751, at a time when there were still only twenty-five buildings in Baltimore. Some of the roads that extend almost straight out from Baltimore toward Pennsylvania and Delaware—one points northwest, one north, and one northeast—are also eighteenth-century creations; they began as post roads to the farmlands of western Maryland and southern Pennsylvania. The railroads, too, although they're a couple of generations younger than the roads and the markets, are linked to the oldest Baltimore: the first stone of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad was put in place on July 4, 1828, by a local patriarch—the ninety-one-year-old Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence. He said in his speech at the stone-laying that these two events were the most important ones in his life.

There are lasting places in the city that still anchor understandings of what it means to be a Baltimorean; it's people's sense of who else is a Baltimorean that seems to expand and contract over time. For almost a hundred years, the Baltimore streetcar lines acted like a network of funiculars yoking the city's hilltop strongholds into a system of available and acceptable destinations for an excursion or an adventure. Most Baltimoreans over thirty-five can remember the numbers of the streetcars they took when they left their own neighborhoods; for William Donald Schaefer, Maryland's governor, who grew up in west Baltimore, the cars were the No. 14, the No. 4, and the No. 9. The No. 9 ran along an east-west line for about seven and a half miles; its eastern terminus was downtown, and to the west it extended almost five miles beyond the city line, winding up in Ellicott City, an old mill town with granite houses tucked away in a steep-sided, wooded valley formed by the third branch of the Patapsco River.

Schaefer says that when he was growing up a streetcar ride—out to Ellicott City; way across town and down to the old Bay Shore amusement park; even a one-mile trip downtown at Christmastime to look at the holiday windows in the May Company, the department store that did Christmas windows best—felt almost like an extraordinary event, a trip to an exotic place, because his own neighborhood already seemed to offer in such full measure everything he wanted and needed: open space, ball

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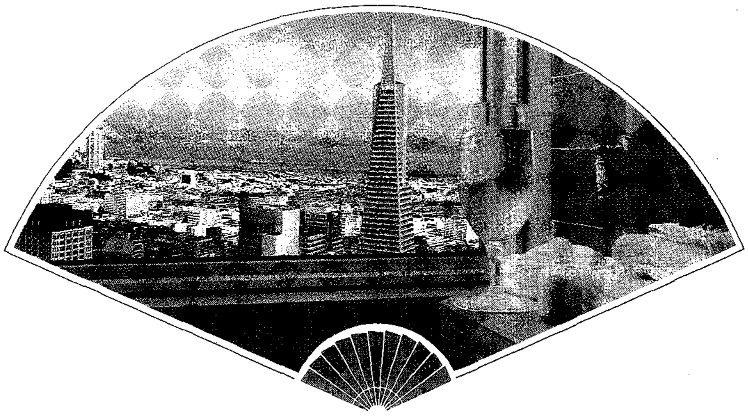

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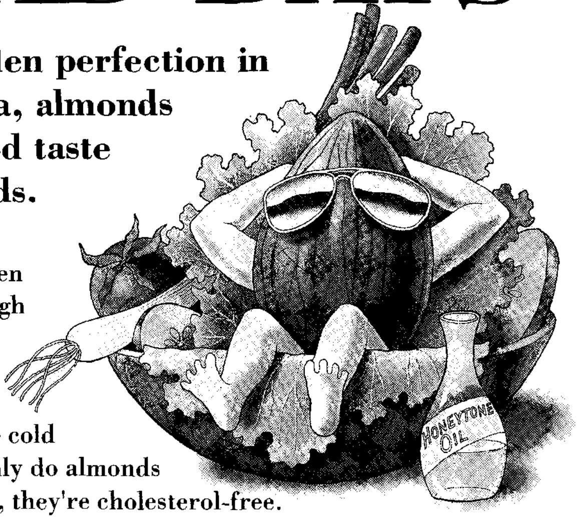

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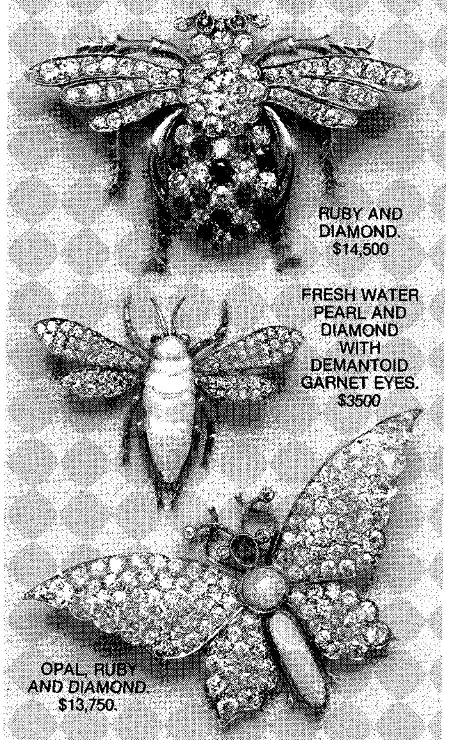

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Schaefer, who is now sixty-nine, is revered by many Baltimoreans as the embodiment of the city's second flowering: he served as mayor of Baltimore for fifteen years—from 1971 to 1987—and was the mayor when the Inner Harbor was redeveloped, and although he has now been reëlected to his second term as governor, many people in the city still instinctively refer to him in conversation as "the Mayor," a habit that can lead to momentary confusion, until someone thinks of asking, "Do you mean the *governor* mayor or the *mayor* mayor?" In his years as mayor, Schaefer did a lot to provoke in his fellow-citizens the same rich sense of a full heritage that had been a natural part of his childhood. He did it by challenging them to recognize that legacy and to protect it. "The attitude that outsiders had adopted at the time—'Let's drive *around* Baltimore, because there's nothing there'—was seeping into the city, and people even began to devalue their own experiences," he says. In his efforts to revalidate some parts of Baltimore, he made a point of walking through every city neighborhood, so that the citizens could see that the Mayor thought they lived in a place worth visiting, and he once had the city make a movie featuring the enormous old churches in the older neighborhoods; people who had seen the movie came up to him later and said, "You know, this is *something*." When neighborhood groups came to City Hall and asked for an improvement, like a new playground, Schaefer, though he enjoyed being known as the Do It Now Mayor, often didn't commit city funds to a project immediately if he thought that the first requirement was for people to want it more before they got it. "What are you going to do to raise money for this project?" the Mayor would ask. "How many cakes can you bake? How many garage sales will you hold?" And he expected city employees to show the same kind of initiative. Former city-cabinet members remember a meeting at which Schaefer announced, "I found an abandoned car on a city street last weekend." Such a sight was unusual in those days, so notebooks were produced, pens uncapped and poised.

"Where is it, Mr. Mayor?" several voices asked.

"If I can find it, you can find it," Schaefer replied.

THERE are three rooms that I find myself returning to in Baltimore—all of them just north of downtown and within easy walking distance of one another—where some of the sweetness that the city distilled and stored up during the first flowering of Baltimore can still be found. People entering these rooms feel specially welcomed by them. "So here you are, at last," the rooms seem to be saying. Two of the rooms are in libraries: one is the Stack Room of the library of the Peabody Institute, the city's first public library, which is a hundred and thirteen years old, and the other is the children's room of the Central Branch of Baltimore's public-library system, which was opened in 1933, during the worst year of the Depression. The Peabody Library, on Mount Vernon Place, where four small parks meet at the crest of the second hill north of the Inner Harbor, is almost the wellspring of Baltimore's first great period of citymaking. The icon of that era, if you look at old hand-tinted postcards, was Baltimore's Washington Monument—the country's first monument to George Washington, which stands in the center of Mount Vernon Place—just across from the Peabody Institute. It was erected in 1829, and symbolizes an important moment of change in American history. It shows Washington, his right hand outstretched, proffering a piece of paper; the paper is his commission as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, which he is surrendering because the United States has now won its independence.

Fifty years ago, according to an old Baltimorean I know, half the houses in the city had on one wall a framed print of Baltimore's Washington Monument and the buildings around it, as a daily reminder of what was then, according to James Waesche's guidebook, "the spot loved more than any other by Baltimoreans and remembered above all others by visitors." Today, these prints seem to have disappeared. True, one man I know, who grew up in the city but long ago built himself a house in Ruxton, a town just north of the city line, still has his father's print of the monument hanging in his house—but more as a reminder of his father and his father's way of thinking than as a reminder of the monument. His daughter, a college student who was home on vacation the day I drove out to Ruxton for a visit, said that she hardly ever gave the Washington Monument a thought, and she added that she didn't want to get too attached to any one spot in the city; she was already old enough, she said, to have learned that "you don't want to hang on too hard to places, because you'll only get disappointed if you do."

In 1922, G. K. Chesterton, on a visit to Baltimore, spent part of an afternoon sitting on a stone bench near the Washington Monument, and he wrote later that during that afternoon he felt he had made contact with the continuity of the city and with "the benediction of the founders of the colonies and fathers of the Republic." He went on, "I had some experience of the thronging of thousands of living thoughts and things, noisy and numberless as birds, that give its everlasting vivacity and vitality to a dead town." That sense is only intermittently available near the monument these days, for Henry Barnes' one-way streets put it in the middle of two alternating traffic surges, one headed uphill to the north and one uphill to the west. The monument itself is still a beautiful barometer of Baltimore weather, though. For a week last year, I could see it from my hotel window: it's built of gray Baltimore County marble that darkens and turns almost green in a rainstorm or, on a fine day toward the end of the afternoon, takes on the ruddy glow of a ripe peach.

Looming over the monument, the Peabody Library offers a sense of uninterrupted contact with a much earlier Baltimore—not the town of the founders but a young city of stirrer-uppers. Baltimore in the eighteen-twenties and thirties was the second-largest city in the country, and the high-tech capital as well. The most rapidly advancing technology at the time was railroad technology, and the city made its first fortune building the first American railroad out to the Ohio Valley—a daring move that allowed Baltimore to compete on even terms with New York, which had recently finished building the Erie Canal. The railroad-building Baltimore was a city that attracted bright young minds. One belonged to Peter Cooper, from New York, who made the boiler tubes for Tom Thumb, the first successful American steam locomotive, and, at least according to a well-worn nineteenth-century legend, constructed it entirely out of the barrels of sixty-nine muskrat guns. Another belonged to George Peabody, from Massachusetts, who went into the dry-goods business in Baltimore, became a financier, moved to London, refused a baronetcy offered him by Queen Victoria, and eventually made enough money to bail out the faltering credit of the federal government during the Civil War. In 1857, Peabody entrusted a group of twenty-five Baltimoreans with something quite astonishing—the gift of a million four hundred thousand dollars to set up an institute dedicated to "the improvement of the moral and intellectual culture of the inhabitants of Baltimore." The Peabody Institute was to consist of a library, a lecture series, an art gallery, and an academy of music. At present, the institute concentrates on musical education—it is known as one of the world's best conservatories, and has educated many of the musicians in the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra—but it can do that because each of its three other original components, according to John Dorsey, the author of "Mr. Peabody's Library," galvanized other men of Peabody's generation who had made fortunes in Baltimore to endow world-class institutions in these fields: the art gallery inspired collections now housed in the Walters Art Gallery and the Baltimore Museum of Art; the lecture series stimulated the financier Johns Hopkins to establish his university; and the library drew the first Hopkins faculty to Baltimore and attracted the attention of Enoch Pratt, who came to Baltimore from Massachusetts and dealt in horseshoes, nails, and coal and later became a merchant banker. Pratt gave the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the beginning of Baltimore's public-library system, to the city. The Peabody Library, now part of Hopkins, is still in place, and still open daily to the public. Its Stack Room is a coolly glowing room, with a sixty-foot ceiling, a huge skylight, a black-and-white patterned marble floor, and five tiers of stacks supported by cast-iron columns around a central open space. It's a room full of light and full of the information arrayed in the tens of thousands of volumes shelved behind wrought-iron balconies on all five tiers of the stacks. The light flooding in through the skylight changes from moment to moment, picking out different colors—gray, buff, gilt—in the columns over your head, and as you sit at one of a number of small desks off the central court, knowledge seems so abundantly available that you feel almost the same kind of gratitude you feel when you stoop to drink from a public fountain: *The city doesn't want me to go thirsty.*

Four blocks southwest of the Peabody Institute, Peabody's bequest to the city has taken on a twentieth-century shape in the children's department of the Central Branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library. The Central Branch occupies a whole city block across from the Basilica of the Assumption. According to Jacques Kelly, who wrote a book called "The Pratt Library Album," the architect was instructed by Joseph L. Wheeler, then the Pratt library director, to design a building that displayed "a dignity characterized by friendliness rather than aloofness." The result is a façade that many people think resembles the front of a department store: there are no steps between the street and the front door, and the main entrance, on Cathedral Street, is flanked by twelve plate-glass windows, six on either side, in which the librarians set up displays—of travel books or history books, say, or the works of a local author, like John Barth or Anne Tyler. Inside, just off a skylighted main hall, is a gift shop stocked with so many books and toys and cards that you wish you knew more people, so you could keep buying.

The room I return to, the children's department, is downstairs. Originally, the room had its own separate entrance, at the back of the library, on Mulberry Street. At the main entrance of the library, the ideas that the front door and the front windows keep broadcasting to all adults passing by are "Come as you are" and "What can we do for you today?" But back on Mulberry the library went even further: it humbled itself to give children a special welcome, like an elephant getting down on its knees to let a small passenger climb aboard. From Mulberry Street you walked down four shallow steps, crossed a broad flagstone terrace (the only garden attached to the library), turned to the right, and descended another four steps, to another terrace. As you descended through the terraces, the walls of the library changed texture, so that instead of walking past fluted pilasters forty feet high—as you do when approaching the main entrance—you walked next to a country-cottage wall of rough-cut fieldstone. By now, you had little doubt that you were about to enter "a magical place." That was Russell Baker's term for Branch 2, the old Pratt branch near Hollins Market—the branch that Mencken had studied in when he was a young man and Baker had hurried to when he was a boy.

The gate on Mulberry Street, at the top of the first flight of steps, is now kept locked, for security reasons, so the only way to get to the children's department is to go in through the main door and down an interior staircase. But the courtyard is still there, and you get to it by going out the old door of the children's department. And inside the children's department there's still a big bay window; a quietly gurgling pool stocked with goldfish and lined with green and gold tiles; a working fireplace; a stuffed lion big enough for toddlers to sit on while pulling its mane, of shoestrings and mopstrings; a rocking chair; bookshelves four feet high; and low desks to sit at. How can you not want to read in such a room?

The plainest of the three rooms I like to go back to in Baltimore is the one where the welcome is most conspicuous, because a man sits just inside the front door at lunchtime and pulls it open for you as you climb two marble front steps. This is the Woman's Industrial Exchange, on North Charles Street, a tearoom and gift shop that began in post-Civil War shame and bitterness and has survived long enough to become the last of the old downtown destinations and a lunchtime showcase of the simple, soothing picnic foods designed long ago both by black cooks and by white cooks to ease everyone through the subtropical summers south of the Mason-Dixon Line. At the Woman's Exchange, you can order homemade chicken salad, sliced white-meat-of-chicken sandwiches, tomato aspic, devilled eggs, iced tea, strawberry shortcake, charlotte russe, and potato-chip cookies, the favorite dessert of the Baltimore filmmaker John Waters.

To my mind, the survival of restaurants such as the Exchange says a lot for the underlying good temper and self-possession of Baltimore. Another is Haussner's, a sixty-five-year-old German restaurant in Highlandtown, in east Baltimore: a restaurant practically wallpapered with hundreds of oil paintings, one a Whistler and some of them clown paintings—a restaurant that "is not for sale, never has been and is not expected to be," as it says right on the menu. When a city starts to get sour on itself, or frightened about its future, it hardens its heart against such places, and they disappear. The "Industrial" in the name Woman's Industrial Exchange means "diligent, industrious"; the founding purpose of the Exchange was to provide ladies in reduced circumstances—Southern sympathizers whose families had lost their money during the war—with a place where they could sell needlework and home cooking anonymously while being "protected from a publicity from which a generous nature shuns," as it was then said, according to a recent article in *Baltimore Magazine*.

Today, the Exchange still sells needlework and other exquisite handwork, and you have your choice of two dining rooms. Downstairs, in The Lunch Counter, patronized by a group of regulars who call themselves the Down Under Club, you can sit on one of a row of swivelling red soda-fountain stools in front of a wooden counter topped with gold-flecked white Formica and look at a signed photograph of Princess Gina, of Liechtenstein. Upstairs, the tearoom proper has red Naugahyde banquettes, marble fireplaces, Audubon prints on the walls, and a black-and-white linoleum floor. Twenty years ago, most of the upstairs waitresses, who wear turquoise uniforms and white aprons tied with big bows, worked in the lunchrooms of the now departed downtown department stores, like the Quixie Restaurant, at Hutzler's, which was famous for its cream sauces, and where "every dish had a light under it," they'll tell you, meaning a can of Sterno, and "there was no hamburger stew on the menu—at least, not until the later years." When these waitresses fuss over you at the Woman's Exchange, you can still feel all the center-of-everything specialness of a trip downtown.

A 1933 photograph of a storytelling hour in front of the fireplace at the Pratt which is reproduced in Jacques Kelly's "Pratt Library Album" shows an integrated audience of rapt children. Enoch Pratt, when he founded the library, stipulated that it was "for all, rich and poor, without distinction of race or color." The old streetcars were also open to both races, and taking them off made segregation in Baltimore worse; most whites now have cars, and never take the buses that replaced the trolleys. At no time after the Civil War did Baltimore blacks lose the right to vote—thanks, in large part, to the intervention early in this century of one of the Roman Catholic cardinal archbishops of Baltimore—but over many decades blacks were systematically excluded from many of the city's public facilities. At one point, black merchants in the public markets were driven from their stalls. They thereupon began hawking their wares from carts hauled by ponies that trudged through the alleys of Baltimore, and descendants of some of these black street venders are still in business today. They're known as Arabs (pronounced "Ay-rabs" in the Baltimore dialect) and their presence in the city, treasured by white cultural historians, is often a source of some pain to middle-class blacks, who can't forget why the first Arabs had to take to the streets. ("Stall" becomes "stole" in Baltimore speech; people who delight in dialects often write down "Bawlamer" as a phonetic rendering of the way local people pronounce the name of their city, but to my ear Baltimoreans are always attempting to squeeze this into a one-syllable word, and make it sound something like "Bllllmmr.")

Discrimination distorted the community of Baltimore and fragmented its memories for so many years that until very recently the practice could easily have been mistaken for one of the permanent, unbreakable features of the city. I spent part of one afternoon in Baltimore with Evelyn Patterson Burrell, a black poet. She is the author of "Weep No More," a moving narrative poem of black history in America. From her I began to learn how "the two Baltimores" have kept separate chronicles of the city for centuries, something most of the whites in the city have been too blind to understand. The blacks understood the whites, she pointed out, because they worked for them and lived next to them: when everyone still lived in the heart of the city, whites lived in row houses on the streets and blacks lived right behind them, in small row houses on the alleys. "You really get to know people when they close their doors and start to behave in ways they never set down in the books they publish," Mrs. Burrell said. Blacks shared whites' private lives but not their public lives. Blacks were never allowed to feel the pull of the Washington Monument, for instance, because the Peabody Institute, although it was founded on nondiscriminatory lines, didn't offer music lessons to black children. "It wasn't *our* Washington Monument," Doris M. Johnson, a member both of the city's school board and of the Baltimore Board of Parks and Recreation, later told me.

And older blacks will tell you, as most whites will not, that Washington, although he had no legitimate children ("The father of our country had no children," the old joke went), fathered a number of children carried by his black slaves; in fact, some black Baltimoreans can give you the street addresses of people alive today who they say have Washington's blood in their veins.

Many black Baltimoreans also remember, as whites usually do not, that the Baltimore clipper ships, speedy oceangoing ships designed in the city which displayed a cloud bank of white sails and proved notably effective as privateers preying on British shipping in the War of 1812, turned in peacetime to slave running, because they were fast enough to outdistance the Coast Guard. And black Baltimoreans remember that the first deaths in the Civil War occurred in Baltimore. A week after the firing on Fort Sumter, which resulted in no fatalities on either side, twelve hundred Massachusetts recruits heading for Washington were

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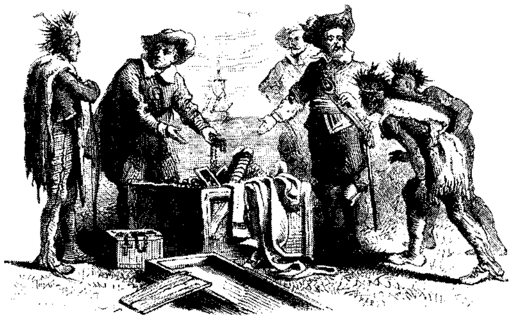

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set upon in Baltimore, as they marched from one train station to another, by a mob of several thousand men, even though Maryland had not seceded from the Union. On Pratt Street, not far from what is now the Inner Harbor, eleven Baltimoreans and four soldiers were killed. In segregated modern Baltimore, even sports didn't bring the two races together. Blacks, Mayor Schmoke told me one day, had a hard time warming to the Orioles when Baltimore finally landed a major-league baseball club, in 1954, because they had grown up rooting for teams in the National League—the league that let Jackie Robinson in.

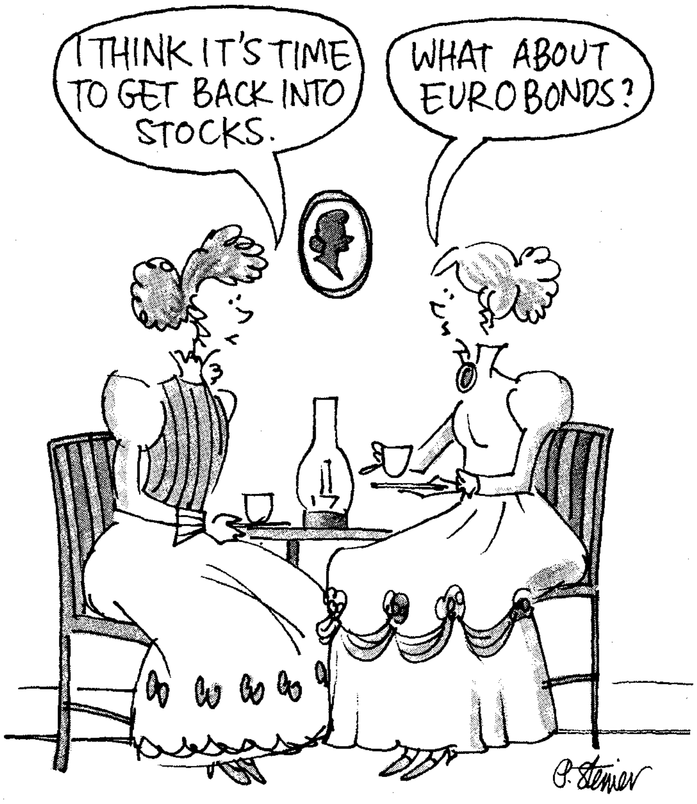
Mrs. Burrell shocked me by saying that, although she had always loathed segregation, she might be tempted, if she were young enough to be going to school today, to try to find a segregated school to attend. (I thought of a black Baltimore friend of mine who had just taken his mother to a reunion of former students at a segregated high school in rural Virginia. The first high school ever set up for blacks in that part of the state, it had only three grades when it opened—no senior class—to make sure that no black could actually get a high-school diploma. And although it offered academic courses, it wasn't called a high school; it was called a training school. White educators explained this to themselves by saying that blacks couldn't be taught but could be trained.) When I asked Mrs. Burrell why she would make such a choice, she compared the kind of education she got in a segregated Baltimore school many years ago with the quality of today's public schools, officially integrated but in reality almost all black, and neglected, in many neighborhoods.

Her remarks reminded me of a talk I had had the day before with Walter Sondheim, one of the grand old men of Baltimore, who took early retirement from a downtown department store twenty-one years ago so he could work for a nonprofit group called the Charles Center–Inner Harbor Management Corporation during the time it was helping to rebuild first the downtown and then the harbor. Sondheim has worn many hats, and he was serving as president of the Baltimore Board of Education in 1954, when the Supreme Court ordered the desegregation of America's public schools. "We were so sure that if white children and black children sat and learned together in the same room, the one act would destroy prejudice in a generation," Sondheim said wistfully. "But that generational mark came and went ten years ago. It was one of the great disappointments of my life."

"We had superb teachers in our school," Mrs. Burrell told me. "I could sit here all day and talk about my teachers. In high school, in addition to literature, math, and science, everyone studied two languages, Latin and French."

Belatedly, a huge, if informally coordinated, program is now taking shape in and around Baltimore to carry out an old plan for pulling Baltimore together submitted to the city on two occasions, in 1904 and in 1926, by the sons of Frederick Law Olmsted—a plan to connect all city parks with green boulevards and green riverbanks, and thus open up the natural areas of the city to all Baltimoreans. With Mayor Schmoke's assistance, a team from the Yale Forestry School which five years ago might have been sent to study community forestry in a Third World country is taking an inventory of species in Leakin Park, one of the city's large wilderness parks. Dr. Torrey Brown, the state's Secretary for the Department of Natural Resources, hopes to use the Olmsted riverbank greenways to connect the city with the suburban citizens who have left it behind.

ONE near-term change in the fabric of the city holds out great promise of reconnecting Baltimoreans with each other, with the residents of the surrounding counties, and even with the natural surroundings of the city—all within the next eight months. It's the new Baltimore light-rail line, which will run over an old railroad right-of-way north of the city, from a terminus in a suburban office park; then head downtown on newly built track of its own along Howard Street, which was the principal shopping street of the city until the old department stores fled to the suburbs; and then, on another old railroad right-of-way, continue to the Baltimore-Washington International Airport, south of the city. A later add-on will be a special center-city loop, using vintage equipment between the city's two surviving railroad stations—Penn Station, where the Amtrak trains stop, and Camden Station, which dates from 1856 and is one of the original B. & O. depots. Commuter trains from Washington are the only trains that now stop at Camden Station, which adjoins the site of Baltimore's new, downtown baseball stadium. Between the two stations a light-rail car or a trolley car might run in each direction every two minutes—a rate so close to saturation service that people will never have to wait long enough to feel that they're waiting. The railroad right-of-way to


I THINK IT'S TIME TO GET BACK INTO STOCKS.
WHAT ABOUT EUROBONDS?

MARKETS AND MARKETABILITY
by Jane Austen

be used north of the city is even more venerable than Camden Station. It's the old Northern Central Railroad, originally the Baltimore and Susquehanna, which was completed in 1831, a year after Peter Cooper hammered Tom Thumb together. It's also the line that Lincoln rode over in 1863 on his way north to speak at Gettysburg; if it is true that, as legend has it, he wrote out his speech on the back of an envelope during the train ride, then a few months from now commuters may start passing and looking at the same line of trees he saw as he thought out his words.

The light-rail line will bring into the old downtown shopping area people who have avoided the place for twenty or thirty years or more. It will take people who live in a black public-housing project in south Baltimore on to jobs at the airport which they now have no way of reaching by public transportation. It will more than double the city's mass-transit capacity, completing half of an ambitious regional rail plan dating from the nineteen-sixties, which calls for rail lines heading out of downtown in six directions. The north-south light-rail line will take the place of two proposed spokes. Only one spoke has been built—a subway line out to the northwest. It, too, is being extended—as far as Johns Hopkins Hospital, in east Baltimore, which means that by 1994 Baltimore will have three and a half of its spokes. A state transportation-planning agency has recently called for the completion of the sixties plan by the year 2000.

The new light-rail line will, at some point in the near future, once funding has been secured, also include a nature trail, running north along the right-of-way between Druid Hill Park and Robert E. Lee Park—a city-owned park outside the city limits, which most Baltimoreans never get to, because in the past it has lacked any mass-transit access. Some north Baltimore and Ruxton residents are concerned that light-rail trains will damage the wilderness qualities in Robert E. Lee Park, while others are excited by the possibility that light rail will make wildlands part of train riders' daily lives. The stretch between the two parks is one that few people in the city know anything about, though thousands of people speed by it every weekday. It runs along Jones Falls, the one branch of the Patapsco in Baltimore that has had

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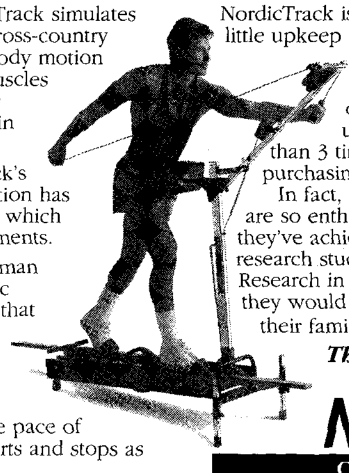

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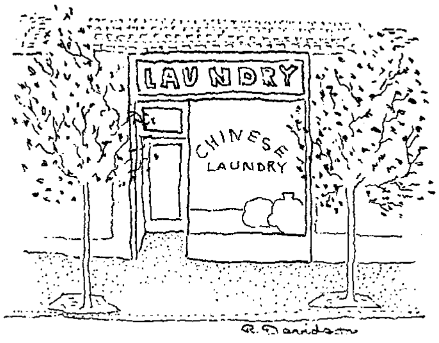
an expressway plopped down beside it, and from a car the whole area looks lunar. Out on the rail line, the place has an entirely different feel: the tracks twist away from the expressway, so you can't see cars but only hear their hum; trees grow down to the riverbank; birds flash by. It's an unknown slice of urban wilderness, cool and inviting, and one man I know says there's good trout fishing in the river a few feet away from the railroad.

A Five-Minute drive north of the Inner Harbor there's one spot, the Baltimore Zoo's wildly popular new Children's Zoo, an eight-acre site in the northeast corner of Druid Hill Park, where all the Baltimores—the preëxisting forests and swamps, farms and estates from the eighteenth century, the modern city, and the potential Baltington—seem equally accessible. Druid Hill Park, almost as large as Central Park in New York, has been the keystone park in Baltimore for more than a hundred and thirty years. Before that, it was mostly farmland, a landscape celebrated locally as one of the most ancient and beautiful estates in Maryland, with a patent dating back to 1688; the zoo's administrative offices are lodged in what was originally the estate's old manor house, an imposing country mansion wrapped around by enormously wide glassed-in porches. Lloyd N. Rogers, the property's last private owner, was so sick about losing his woods and rolling hills and meadows to the public realm that just before the Civil War began he sat up on what had been his front porch and boycotted the park's inaugural ceremony, an event that the city had convened on the mansion's front lawn. The Children's Zoo sits at one edge of the park, next to a densely wooded slope that drops down a couple of hundred feet in one great leap to Jones Falls and the roadbed of the new light-rail line. These woods are still almost virgin forest, thick with giant beeches and tulip poplars and the immense white oaks commemorated in the name Druid Hill, given first to the estate and later to the park. Many of the initials carved into the oak-tree trunks date back at least to the nineteenth century. Stroll through the edge of this hushed old wild forest, and in early summer, when the area is drenched with the smell of honeysuckle, you can often catch a sharp whiff lingering in the air—the scent left by a red fox strolling by.

Although the tennis courts and the swimming pool in Druid Hill Park were segregated facilities until the early nineteen-sixties, the park for many years was the central public place in the city where east Baltimoreans and west Baltimoreans could get to know one another and picnic together on the great lawns. In recent years, because of a perception of increased crime, the park itself—though not the zoo—has lost some of its old drawing power, even though, according to Brian Rutledge, the zoo's director, a study made in the mid-eighties turned up the fact that there are about seventy reportable crimes committed in the park every year (a category of offenses that ranges from purse snatching and window breaking up to the most serious felonies), and that almost exactly matches the number of reportable crimes that takes place every weekend at each of six suburban shopping malls near Baltimore. The zoo, formerly a city agency that now raises its own money and also gets some state support, has in the nine years since Rutledge took charge of it become a favorite weekend destination for people in the city and in Baltimore County, and even for families two hours away in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It's the only tourist attraction in the state that consistently pulls in larger crowds every year.

A lot of this has to do with the way that Rutledge, a sculptor and former commercial artist turned zookeeper, designs exhibits. In "The Sword in the Stone," T. H. White's magical children's book about King Arthur's childhood, Merlyn, Arthur's tutor, prepares the young prince for the responsibility of kingship by transforming him into different creatures living on his stepfather's estate—a badger in the woods, a fish in the castle moat, a hawk kept for hunting—so that the boy can acquire the strengths of all the life forms native to England. Rutledge's Children's Zoo, which opened a year ago, pulls modern children deep inside the lives of Maryland animals. The idea is that by learning about the environment "from the inside out," as Rutledge says, members of the one species in the animal kingdom with the power to live like emperors can get a taste of what it means to be responsible for a whole planet.



Many modern zoos, the Baltimore zoo among them, have rebuilt themselves to be way stations in a global life-protection program: they specialize in captive-breeding programs of endangered species from around the world, with the hope that later generations of these animals can eventually be returned to the wild. (The Baltimore Zoo has successful breeding programs for black-footed penguins, lappet-faced vultures, and lion-tailed macaques.) At the same time, thanks to the growth of the landscape-immersion movement, as it's known, many zoos have redesigned their exhibits so that animals are seen in naturalistic settings instead of in cages, with the result that they no longer seem mere curiosities but reemerge as fellow-beings. And ten years ago, in another breakthrough, the Children's Zoo at the Bronx Zoo in New York adapted playground equipment for zoo purposes—they've got a giant spider web, for instance, made out of rope that kids can clamber around on—and now kids can do more than get close to animals and look at them. Rutledge has assembled all these advances and put them to a new purpose.

Rutledge's father, a psychologist who was one of the founders of family therapy in this country, was part Cherokee, and when his son was small the two of them would spend a month every summer in the woods studying animal tracks. Brian got so that he could look at the prints left by a group of deer, figure out where they were probably headed, take a short cut, and then settle down so that he could unobtrusively watch them arrive. The Children's Zoo re-creates all the landscapes of Maryland: there are marshes, woods, a stream bank, a meadow, a cave, a beaver pond, a farmyard. In an aviary in a marsh, kids can climb into a huge oriole's nest or hop across the surface of a pond on a series of giant lily pads—that's the way a gallinule, a Maryland marsh bird, gets across the surface of a pond. In the cave, they can hunt in the water with their hands, the way a raccoon hunts with its paws, feeling in the dark until they touch and recognize the shape of a carved frog. Near the stream bank, they can crawl into outsized box-turtle shells. "I'll consider this exhibit a success if someday an eighteen-year-old who's just gotten his driver's license swerves around a box turtle trying to cross a road because once he had himself been a box turtle," Rutledge says.

According to a new report by Governor Schaefer's Commission on Growth in the Chesapeake Bay Region, the health of the Bay can be assured only by two forces: a new pattern of growth that respects the farms and woods and steep slopes and stream corridors and wildlife habitats of Maryland, and an education program that creates a shared sense that every human action in the Bay's immense watershed affects the state of the Bay for better or for worse. At the Baltimore Zoo's Children's Zoo, this education program, which has yet to be enacted by the Maryland Legislature, is already hard at work. I'm thinking particularly of one unforgettable spot—a transparent twelve-foot-long archway that leads under the middle of the beaver pond and gives you an up-close view of five sinuous Maryland river otters nosing around among the rocks at the bottom of the pond and then darting up and directly over your head to chase one another around the other half of the pond. Rutledge says he has seen the otters stashing food under rocks—a behavior previously unknown to biologists, because no one in the past has been able to look at their lives from below. When he and I stood under the arch earlier this month, three small Baltimore children, two black girls and a white boy, wandered in and pressed their noses against the glass and didn't want to leave, long after their families had had enough. "Oh, my!" the smaller of the girls kept saying. "Oh, my!" —TONY HISS

•

Nature's artistry was on display around Portage County this morning as the rain and snow which swept through the area on Sunday combined with wind and cold temperatures to cloak the county in an icy glove. The palette will be wiped clean today, however, as temperatures forecast to reach the 50-degree range and partly sunny skies release trees like this one from their glacial skins. For more details on today's weather, turn to page 12.—*Photo caption in the Ravenna & Kent (Ohio) Record-Courier.*

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THE THEATRE

One Sister

THE production of "Three Sisters" at the Atlantic Theatre Company (Off Off) is an all but total miss. David Mamet's script, which is based on "a literal translation" by Vlada Chernomordik, sounds all right, but it's spoken without much distinction. At the beginning, when I noticed that the Army officers were slouching around in the Prozoroffs' parlor—in James Wolk's exquisite setting—I thought I'd come to the wrong play. In the chapter on "The Three Sisters" in "My Life in Art" Stanislavsky reports that Chekhov was too ill to attend the dress rehearsal of the original production, but says, "Chekhov had left a viceroy in the person of a lovable colonel who was to see that there should be no mistakes made in the customs of military life, in the manner and method of the officers' bearing. . . . Anton Pavlovich paid a great deal of attention to this detail of his play. . . . In truth, Anton Pavlovich always had the best of opinion about military men." (In producing a Chekhov play, you ignore Chekhov at your peril.)

I had always thought that this drama about three cultivated young women from Moscow whose spirits are crushed in the small provincial town where they are exiled was indestructible, the writing is so firm and specific. I was wrong. In an apparent effort to avoid any hokum or stagy fakery, the actors, under the direction of W. H. Macy, have here avoided animation itself. There are exceptions: the Masha of Elizabeth McGovern (a guest artist with the company) is properly beautiful, and she slowly gains strength, so that her confession of love for Vershinin, on the night of the fire, is as moving as it should be; and Nesbitt Blaisdell is forthright and crotchety as the servant gofer, Ferapont. I spent most of the evening, when not admiring the settings and Laura Cunningham's handsome costumes and Howard Werner's lighting, remembering other performances and other productions of this wonderful play: Rosemary Harris's Olga and Austin Pendleton's Baron Tusenbach at the Brooklyn Academy in 1977; Dianne Wiest's smoldering, outrageous Masha at the Manhattan Theatre Club in 1983; and Vladimir Belokurov as Masha's schoolteacher husband and Nikolai Alexeyev as Andrei, the sisters' disappointing brother, in the Moscow Art Theatre production at the City Center in 1965. I had to look up the Russian names, of course, but I remembered the actors, and will forever.

—EDITH OLIVER

Molotov Cocktail

Let me stop for a bit:
This was my greatest hit. . . .
I got 'em paying more
For just another whore.
—*The Engineer in "Miss Saigon."*

"WILL you ever trust me again?" the fresh-faced G.I. asks his wife of one year, referring to the child he fathered on a Vietnamese "bar girl" during a brief but poignant romance just before the fall of Saigon. The wife, having known about neither the child nor the romance, is understandably distressed. (Her concerns are attuned more to the exigencies of pop opera than to real life. "Is it her, now, or is it me?" she wants to know.) But, having heard the G.I.'s explanation ("There in the shambles of a war, I found what I was looking for: Saigon was crazed, but she was real, And for one moment I could feel"), she is already relenting. "It's all right now," she croons. "I'm with you, we'll get through this, we'll pull through." The bar girl shoots herself, but because her act perfectly mirrors the ritual suicide of Cio-Cio-San in "Madama Butterfly," and because, in a glorious million-dollar flashback, we have seen Saigon fall and a helicopter take off inside the Broadway Theatre, a good time is had by all. Moreover, since the implied question behind the G.I.'s plight—How does such a nice guy get into such a pickle?—raises the spectre of allegory, Broadway audiences are able to indulge in the popular sport of national self-criticism. Nice guys, we learn, should be more careful. And so they should.

But what is the show like? Well, it's like a lot of things—it's like "South Pacific," "The King and I," and "Pacific Overtures." It has elements of "West Side Story" and "Oliver" and "Fiddler," and moments of striving to be "Pal Joey" and "Cabaret." Mostly, though, "Miss Saigon" is like "Les Misérables," which Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg also wrote. It has the same kinds of characters—a Fantine figure (the seduced-and-abandoned bar girl, Kim, played by Lea Salonga), a Thénadier figure (the parasitic Eurasian pimp known as The Engineer, played by Jonathan Pryce), a sort of proto-Cosette figure (Kim's little boy, Tam, wordlessly played by Brian R. Baldomero)—and the same kinds of songs and numbers. An early whorehouse number offers the same plain-speaking-about-what-it's-like-to-be-a-prostitute observations as the one at the beginning of "Les Misérables," and it leads into a how-I-escape-from-the-harsh-re-

"I've been framed!"

ality-of-my-life song ("The Movie in My Mind"), which closely resembles "I Dreamed a Dream." There's a what-a-rotten-time-to-fall-in-love number, sung by the hero, Chris (Willy Falk), and his sidekick, John (Hinton Battle), which is like the one between Marius and Enjolras in "Les Mis," and there's a how-to-be-a-cynic song, performed by Mr. Pryce ("If You Want to Die in Bed"), which, like the corresponding song in the English version of "Les Misérables," represents the show's only instance of actual good writing. There are the same kinds of costly and spectacular breakaway sets, designed by John Napier; the same kind of high-contrast lighting, designed by David Hersey; and the same canny staging by a Royal Shakespeare Company director—in this case, Nicholas Hytner. There are also the same hackneyed rhymes (boy/joy, kind/mind, kill/will), and a new one, of course (wife/life), as well as what sound like inversions of some of the very musical progressions that make up the score for "Les Misérables," so that in many places "Miss Saigon" seems not so much a rehashing of earlier material as an actual transposition. Also, the storytelling is characterized by the same dramatic vacuum. Like "Les Mis," the show has no real characters, no ironies, no ideas. Words are of no importance whatever.

I don't remember ever hearing anyone complain about the hypocrisy quotient in "Les Misérables" (for that you had to go to "Forbidden Broadway"). Mostly what seemed laughable to us was the dramaturgy: a character appeared, sang a generic song, then died, and we were supposed to care. One assumes that in France, where Victor Hugo's novel is still a familiar classic, people responded to the show on the basis of knowledge and associations they brought with them to the theatre. "Miss Saigon" has the same paint-by-number approach to narrative: we know nothing about any of the characters except their names. (Until the end of the first act, for instance, we never actually hear anyone talk about The Engineer engineering anything and, in fact, have to *supply* an explanation for his being called that.) Presumably, what is supposed to fill the dramatic void in this instance is the analogy with "Madama Butterfly."

The transformation of the cynical "Yankee" Pinkerton into a naïve, well-meaning American soldier whose failure is a failure of conscience is supposed to be an indictment of United States military "do-gooding." It's a neat concept; unfortunately, it doesn't work, partly because the show's focus is The Engineer rather than the soldier, and partly because Mr. Pryce's portrayal is so dissociative. It's the kind of performance that gets called "great" because it looks effortful and unpleasant to do, but The Engineer remains a cipher, lost in Pryce's misguided attempt to seem American. With his Englishman's weird notion of how Americans talk and his show-biz gestures and mannerisms, Mr. Pryce towers over everyone else in the cast, and seems more like someone from Mars than the sort of desperate, insignificant, cosmopolitan man-without-a-country that Peter Lorre, say, used to play. As for Miss Salonga, you never saw anyone less waiflike. Strong-voiced and sturdily built, she's easy to imagine at Bloomingdale's, fighting her way through crowds of Christmas shoppers—more difficult to see as the helpless orphan of a war-torn country. Equally disconcerting is the fact that her accent, singing style, and vocal mannerisms are all firmly planted in America. Like Mr. Falk and Mr. Battle, she sings in that strained, high-pitched belt, somewhere between a yelp and a whine, which comes from the forehead and seems calculated to indicate how very, very hard singing is. This is not music so much as orchestrated emotion.

In a quiet but incisive piece in the Sunday *Times* the novelist Robert Stone used the term "moral kitsch" to describe "Miss Saigon." It's a curiously apt phrase, and one that's useful in distinguishing Boublil and Schönberg from Andrew Lloyd Webber. People tend to lump them together, because Cameron Mackintosh, who produced "Les Mis" and "Miss Saigon," is also Lloyd Webber's producer. But Boublil and Schönberg, though Lloyd Webber's equals in shrewdness, are angling for a more sophisticated audience—one that prefers its entertainment laced with self-loathing. For Lloyd Webber's audiences the mere presence of an expensive or movable gimmick—the roller skates, the falling chandelier—is enough to hang a show on. In "Les Misérables" and "Miss Saigon," the gimmick is a kind of piety.

"Les Misérables" was first produced at the Palais des Sports in Paris. When the Royal Shakespeare Company adopted it as a project, they gussied it up with high-quality orchestrations, but if you listen to the French recording one of the things you can hear is the badness of the music, its vulgarity—specifically, its roots in Parisian bubble-rock. In "Miss Saigon" the sports-arena aesthetic remains more exposed. You see it in the performances of the stars. You see it in the embarrassing Ho Chi Minh ballet in Act I. You hear it in the music, which has voices pulsing with vibrato when there is nothing to emphasize or sustain. Most of all, you see it in the obscene number that begins Act II—a save-the-children choral anthem about orphaned Amerasian children of American soldiers that is illustrated by film footage of real children.

How, you ask yourself, can the creators of this show justify using the real suffering of real people to enrich themselves? (It's not as though Messrs. Hytner, Mackintosh, Boublil, and Schönberg were using this footage to solicit money that they were then going to give away.) The answer, I think, lies in their approach to language and imagery: these people believe in the sound bite as literature, in images as signals—carriers of information that other agents (audiences, critics) then act upon. But this is the stuff of deconstruction. In fact, "Miss Saigon" represents a marriage between the French Academy and the British intelligentsia: it's semiotics bailing out Marxist socialism, for if words have no importance and art has no fixed meaning, if characters and symbols exist independent of artistic intention, then there's no such thing as hypocrisy. No wonder that at the height of the war in the Gulf *Variety* reported that Mr. Mackintosh was thinking of altering Mr. Pryce's big showstopper about American greed and consumerism, "The American Dream," lest the politics of the number affect box-office sales. No wonder that the *Post* said Mr. Hytner handed out miniature likenesses of Ho Chi Minh as his gifts to the cast.

—MIMI KRAMER

MUSICAL EVENTS

American Heroes

BIOGRAPHICAL opera is a difficult genre, and the latest example of it, Ulysses Kay's "Frederick Douglass," which had its first performance last week, is not a successful work of art. Three better examples are David Blake's "Toussaint," Thea Musgrave's "Harriet, the Woman Called Moses," and Anthony Davis's "X." (Philip Glass's "Satyagraha," about Gandhi in South Africa, is a fourth, but that ritual piece, its text from the Bhagavad Gita, is less readily comparable.) "Toussaint" has its start in history and specifically in C. L. R. James's study "The Black Jacobins." Blake wrote of his "wish, in the opera house, not only to be entertained but to be informed, to be intellectually stimulated (that is, made to think), and, finally, to be made to take up a position." His librettist, Anthony Ward, wanted "to explore the confusions of style when a state tries to create itself." They produced a work at once entertaining, informative, and stimulating —more than a historical pageant, and more than a Brechtian parable, though with elements of both in its musically and dramaturgically rich structure. The opera is dedicated "to the Haitian people, in recognition of their vitality and resilience." Suzanne, Toussaint's wife, is their representative, a shining constant through the shifting political turmoil. As a practical result, there is a large mezzo-soprano role in what would otherwise be a male drama.

The printed libretto of "Toussaint" begins with a list of recommended reading: from the James study to "The Autobiography of Malcolm X." The latter is the main source of Davis's opera. With a "story" shaped by Christopher Davis and a libretto written by Thulani Davis, "X" is the most fully biographical of the four operas; it portrays Malcolm X's criminal youth, his conversion to Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam, his pilgrimage to Mecca and vision there of a wider brotherhood ("all *races*, all *colors*—blue-eyed blonds to black-skinned Africans—in *true* brotherhood"), his assassination.

Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass are two high heroes of American nineteenth-century history. "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself" was published in 1845—one of several such narratives and, so far as I have read them, the most stirring and best written of all. In a preface William Lloyd Garrison wrote, "He who can peruse it without a tearful eye, a heaving breast, an afflicted spirit . . . must have a flinty heart." A few years later, Theodore Parker said, "We have one series of literary productions that could be written by none but Americans, and only here: I mean the Lives of Fugitive Slaves. . . . All the original romance of America is in them, not in the white man's novels." The Boston *Commonwealth* picked up the sentiment in 1863, introducing an account of Harriet Tubman's life:

> It was said long ago that the true romance of America was not in the fortunes of the Indian, where Cooper sought it, nor in New England character, where Judd found it [does anyone today read Judd's Transcendentalist novel "Margaret"?], nor in the social contrasts of Virginia planters, as Thackeray imagined, but in the story of the fugitive slaves. The observation is as true now as it was before War, with swift, gigantic hand, sketched the vast shadows, and dashed in the high lights in which romance loves to lurk and flash forth. But the stage is enlarged on which these dramas are played, the whole world now sit as spectators, and the desperation or the magnanimity of a poor black woman has power to shake the nation that so long was deaf to her cries. We write of . . . a woman whose career is as extraordinary as the most famous of her sex can show.

The life of America's Moses, America's St. Joan, was one of action: time and again, after her own escape, she ventured South to lead and guide and rescue her fellows from slavery; and Musgrave's opera "Harriet" shows her in action. Musgrave wrote the libretto herself and describes it as "very freely based on the life of Harriet Tubman." The noble opera is weakened, I think, by the introduction of an invented, conventional, Puccini-type "love interest"—a capitulation to audiences' operatic expectations—which played no part in Harriet Tubman's own history. The life of Frederick Douglass, on the other hand, was, after his escape, one of public oratory. To Harriet Tubman he wrote, in 1868:

> The difference between us is very marked. Most that I have done and suffered in the service of our cause has been in public, and I have received much encouragement at every step of the way. You, on the other hand, have labored in a private way. I have wrought in the day—you in the night. I have had the applause of the crowd and the satisfaction that comes of being approved by the multitude, while the most that you have done has been witnessed by a few trembling, scarred, and foot-sore bondmen and women, whom you have led out of the house of bondage, and whose heartfelt *"God bless you"* has been your only reward. The midnight sky and the silent stars have been the witnesses of your devotion to freedom and of your heroism. Excepting John Brown—of sacred memory [Tubman, Douglass, and Parker were associates of Brown]—I know of no one who has willingly encountered more perils and hardships to serve our enslaved people than you have.

But before Frederick Douglass's escape into public life, there was the thrilling tale, told in the "Narrative," of an intelligent slave-born youth's courage and resolution. It contains incidents striking and terrible; people and places are graphically described; but it is largely the tale of a mind, and might not provide matter for an effective opera. Music could perhaps heighten the "Narrative" only in the form of a song cycle or a cantata. Douglass wrote eloquently about slave song:

> They would make the dense old woods, for miles around, reverberate with their wild songs, revealing at once the highest joy and the deepest sadness. They would compose and sing as they went along, consulting neither time nor tune. The thought that came up, came out—if not in the word, in the sound. . . . I have sometimes thought that the mere hearing of those songs would do more to impress some minds with the horrible character of slavery, than the reading of whole volumes of philosophy on the subject could do. . . . They told a tale of woe which was altogether beyond my feeble comprehension; they were tones loud, long, and deep; they breathed the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest anguish. . . .
>
> I have often been utterly astonished, since I came to the north, to find persons who could speak of the singing, among slaves, as evidence of their contentment and happiness. It is impossible to conceive of a greater mistake. Slaves sing most when they are most unhappy.

Kay and his librettist, Donald Dorr, ignored Frederick Douglass's earlier, heroic life. They concocted a drama around his late years, when he was minister-resident and consul-general to the Republic of Haiti. It was an important appointment, which Douglass valued. When President Hippolyte refused consent to the establishment of an American naval base on the island, Douglass—who had been decently doubtful anyway about his country's imperialism—in the light of this failure resigned his post. In the opera, this is cheapened to a melodrama in which the downfall of a black man too prominent in Washington is contrived by (in the words of the synopsis) "sending him to some obscure outpost on a diplomatic mission that must fail." In the opening scene, a senator, a Cabinet secretary, a merchant, and a journalist talk interminably about their plan. (Verdi took only a few bars, in the introduzione to "Un Ballo in Maschera," to establish a conspiracy.)

Douglass's second wife, Helen, was white. In the opera, the conspirators decide that she must not share his fate, and so they appoint one Aubrey, a naval officer, to be his aide-de-camp and to betray him and save her. He becomes the primo tenore of the piece. In Act II, he spouts Swinburne at Helen and sings with her at length, trying to turn her against her husband. At the start of Act III, he spouts French, and later, at the secretary's command, commits suicide. (Why? the listener asks. This is a difficult libretto to understand.) The other principal role is Douglass's son Howard, a baritone. (The real Douglass's sons were named Lewis, Frederick, and Charles Remond.) He has two scenes with his white stepmother, one hostile, one friendly, and neither necessary to the plot. Dorr ends his program note with the remark "Needless to say, any resemblance to actual persons is entirely coincidental."

The libretto is poetastry. In conversation there are lines like "I beg you not to abjure my act too quickly" and "Humble her hands were, / calloused with the pain of labor, / scored where the burning tears / had coursed in her long waiting." In the "Narrative," there is a famous passage in which the youth contemplates the ships in Chesapeake Bay:

> You are loosed from your moorings, and are free; I am fast in my chains, and am a slave! You move merrily before the gentle gale, and I sadly before the bloody whip! You are freedom's swift-winged angels, that fly round the world; I am confined in bands of iron! O that I were free! O, that I were on one of your gallant decks, and under your protecting wing!

In the opera, this becomes:

> Those sails were wings, then—
> golden with exotic vision,
> destined for shores unknown, a world
> away.
> Endless horizons, harbors of delight—
> dumb boyish hopes believed in them!

Kay's music is drab and trite: Puccinian in harmonic idiom; melodically unmemorable, with little except sequencing to distinguish aria from recitative; often thickly and brassily scored. I find nothing to praise. "Frederick Douglass" was the only big new opera of the season in or around New York. It was given a public preview and a single performance, by the New Jersey State Opera, in Newark Symphony Hall. (Sharpe James, the mayor of Newark, took part as a super.) The principals were Kevin Maynor (Douglass), Klara Barlow (Helen), Ronald Naldi (Aubrey), and Gregory Rahming (Howard). Alfredo Silipigni conducted, Louis Johnson directed, and Salvatore Tagliarino designed. The performance was undistinguished; but then the artists had little to work with. —ANDREW PORTER

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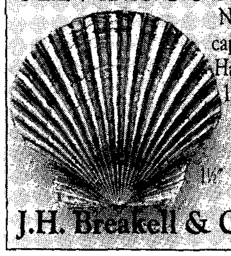

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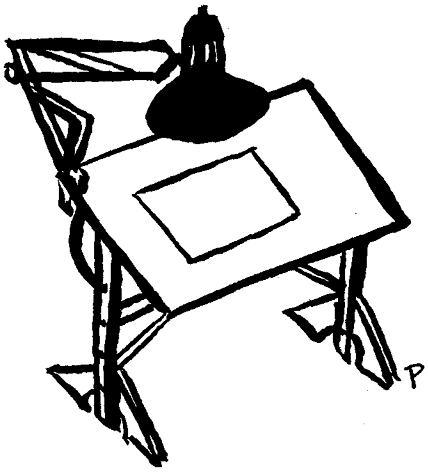
THE ART WORLD

Window Gazing

THIS spring, the National Gallery graciously allowed its friends to give it a lot of art works in order to celebrate the museum's fiftieth birthday, and then it hung some of them up and called the exhibit "Art for the Nation." Of the five hundred and fifty works the gallery received, it chose to spend a lot of energy publicizing Wayne Thiebaud's 1963 painting "Cakes," which shows thirteen layer cakes displayed in late-afternoon light. The curators put "Cakes" on many of the handouts and leaflets and other ephemera that went with the exhibition. It is a bright and seemingly uncomplicated painting with a melancholy undercurrent, and it has become an instant favorite in the museum—the "Nighthawks" or "Christina's World" of the national collection. Serendipitously, a new book of Thiebaud's graphic work is due from Bedford Arts this summer. (Right now, not a single book about Thiebaud is available in the National Gallery bookstore; the fine, though somewhat stiff-jointed, museum catalogue, by Karen Tsujimoto, of Thiebaud's 1985 retrospective at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is very hard to find.) All this attention may perhaps lead to a new fame for this masterly, slightly underloved American painter.

Thiebaud is hardly unknown. His work has been around for thirty years, and in California, where he was born seventy-one years ago, and where he has spent his whole life, he holds an almost legendary reputation as a teacher. He has had his share of honorary doctorates and one-man shows, and nobody is giving his pictures away. ("Cakes" is rumored to have cost the friends of the National Gallery about a million dollars.) Yet even people who try to keep up with contemporary American art and who have a taste for the more "conservative" realist fringe—where Thiebaud would, at least superficially, seem to belong—may not immediately recognize his name, or place him in the first rank of American painters, and this requires some explanation.

People began to pay attention to Thiebaud around the time of Pop, and because he painted ice-cream cones and club sandwiches and lipsticks and jars of cold cream, all isolated against bare backgrounds and casting long blue shadows, he was for a while thought of as a Pop artist. But his virtuoso gifts as a descriptive painter and his commitment to an art mediated through the eye and the mind rather than through the pervasive clichés of advertising quickly made him look *retardataire*—like a charming provincial who didn't really get it. Then, as the various "traditionalist" reactions against Pop set in, Thiebaud's commitment to the American vernacular—to the cakes and gumball machines and soda fountains and coffee-shop pies that he takes as subjects, and to the cake-counter and coffee-shop come-ons and displays that he uses as starting points for compositions—seemed to put him outside the winter-mud-and-autumn-leaf pieties of most American realist painting. Thiebaud is unclassifiable. He is too devoted to tradition to be a Pop artist, too lighthearted and unpretentious to be a traditionalist in the more obvious manner of Wyeth, or even of William Bailey, and too tenderly regarding of his subject matter to be thought of as a pioneer "commodity" artist. (But no downtown puritan has ever looked as precisely as Thiebaud has at the way American abundance is packaged by its merchants, and if the theme of Thiebaud's sunny and rapt pictures had to be summed up in a phrase it would be "commodity fetishism.")



If Thiebaud cannot be classified, he can at least be characterized. He is, first of all, a painter with an unequalled ability to register an object seen as a thing enjoyed. He is, in a way, a literary painter, with an eye for the tiny, trivial thing that can be charged with meaning, and he has a writer's gift for making objects into symbols without betraying them as objects, so that they carry their little frosting of significance lightly and painlessly; a Thiebaud pie manages to suggest a world of longing—a serene abundance that is always a windowpane away—and yet remain a perfectly painted pie. Thiebaud is also one of the very few American painters to have a meaningful illusionistic technique; what he does with a brush demands a high degree of accumulated knowledge and savvy, and would be difficult or impossible for most other painters, but it is never merely showy or rote or conventional.

"Cakes" is mint Thiebaud—a big picture, five feet by six, and the closest that Thiebaud has ever come to a self-conscious "masterpiece," a monumental summing up. The thirteen cakes are set in three unevenly spaced rows, against a steeply pitched, light-aqua background. There is a horizon line about three-fourths of the way up the picture's surface, with a little "sky" of vanilla hovering above. The cakes rest on stands, and the rows are staggered, or syncopated, so that each cake is just looking over its neighbor's shoulder. They are the kind of American cakes that succeed more as furniture than as pastry—those four- and five-layer towers that spin gravely in their cases at the Carnegie Deli or that sit patiently in the pastry case of a Madison Avenue coffee shop. They don't look edible; instead, they have a hardy, varnished solidity, like old-fashioned toys—wooden tops, or snare drums. We know these cakes by name, and can recite them: Boston cream pie, chocolate layer, coconut layer, angel food, strawberry birthday. (Part of Thiebaud's wit is to touch, like a good comedian, on a knowledge so deep that we hardly knew we had it.)

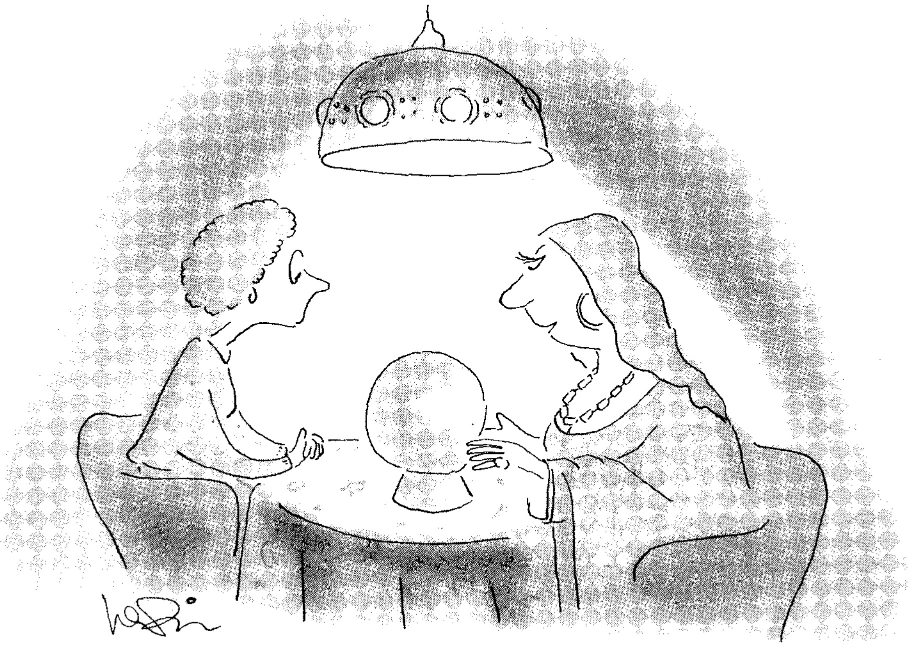
The environment in which the cakes sit seems at first like an enlarged detail from a Hopper street scene—a lifelike rendering of a bakery window in the long shadows of four o'clock. But a second look suggests that this composition comes from a realm of idealized vision, or from a poeticized memory.

The "window" is too big, the spacing too broad; there are too many cakes here to be quite practical or really salable. And the perspective is "wrong": the plane of the picture is improbably tilted up, like the tables in Cézanne still-lifes, so that the perfectly circular tops of the cakes are completely visible, as though each cake were rising on tiptoe to bow at the viewer.

Thiebaud is a supreme orchestrator of intervals, who can transform a standard shopwindow arrangement simply by spacing it in a new way. Just by pulling apart the "givens" of a window display—tilting a plane here, bending a shadow there, opening up a seemingly regular interval somewhere else—he can give artless, unpretentious arrangements some of the repetitive rhythm and authority of classical design. "Cakes" is about abundance, but there is no glut in its arrangement, which is decisive and severe. The picture's resonance lies in the tension between the dense and sensual excitement of Thiebaud's descriptions and the austerity of the means employed to discipline them—in the way the cake stands have improbably tall and attenuated spindles, so that each cake is mounted high enough to cast a perfect shadow on the aqua ground, or in the way that each cake has been pushed just off center on its plate, so that the simple repeated circles are set off by an undercurrent of ellipses. The effect of looking at all thirteen cakes one after another is like listening to a whole-note scale struck lightly on a vibraphone.

The shapes between the cakes have atmosphere rather than architecture, and sit within an envelope of recognizably American light. It is a light that is at first as familiar—as typical, as generic—as the cakes it surrounds: a chalky, melancholy light, which seems to have been bottled sometime in the nineteen-thirties in a small Midwestern city and to have been spilling into American painting ever since. Thiebaud uses this light so liberally that, through sheer excess, it becomes Californian. It becomes the sudden glare that you experience on the West Coast just after you take off your sunglasses—a light focussed and intensified, it seems, by being bounced off the windshields and chromework of an infinity of parked cars, and reflected up from the bare white pavements of countless empty midday streets.

Thiebaud's touch always reminds you of what made oil painting catch on in the first place, some five hundred years ago—not its inherently "expressive" powers (for surely pencils are more immediately sensitive to touch and to nuance, and tempera more naturally monumental) but the way it can record light striking the surfaces of things. Thiebaud catches each bit of icing and decoration passionately: the sugar rosette, the pastry-bag swirl, the way each Maraschino cherry planted in a circle casts its own shadow. In certain places, Thiebaud jokingly plays the part of confectioner—smearing thick brown paint, for example, to duplicate chocolate frosting. In other places, the paint surface couldn't be more unlike what it represents. The two adjoining angel-food cakes that stand dead center in the picture (and which are the only repeated cakes), for instance, are painted prismatically, as a composite of orange and beige and sky blue and putty. (White is Thiebaud's touchstone. He has said, "From a painter's standpoint, white both absorbs light and reflects light—it's composed of all colors, like Chardin's tablecloths.")



"First, you will meet Mr. Hot. Next, you will meet Mr. Cool. Then you will meet Mr. Right."

• •

If Thiebaud knows how to use color as a descriptive medium, he also knows how to use it as an expressive halo. The cakes, which seem so honestly and forthrightly described, turn out, when they're seen up close, to be outlined with rings and rainbows of pure color—bright blues and reds and purples, which register at a distance only as a just perceptible vibrato. These rings are Thiebaud's own invention—there's nothing quite like them in any other painting—and they give to his pictures not just a sense of the shiver of light in a particular place but also the sense that the scene has the interior life and unnatural emphases of something recalled from memory.

Thiebaud's investment in his unpretentious subjects seems tinged with a wry and deliberate gallantry—a sort of cool. Reading what he has to say about his work, and looking at his drawings (a Thiebaud sketchbook was published a few years ago by Abrams), you learn that he is able to achieve this detachment, and keep his pictures from being merely saccharine, by looking at his material primarily as objects, and only secondarily as subjects. "At the end of 1959 or so I began to be interested in a formal approach to composition," he wrote once in an essay. "I picked things like pies and cakes—things based upon simple shapes like triangles and cir-

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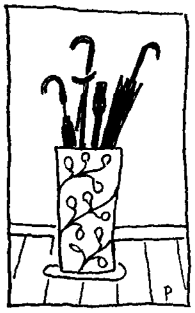
cles—and tried to orchestrate them. Working from memory, I tried to arrange them in the same way that an art director arranges things. . . . My approach was very formalistic, except that I became increasingly affected by the idea of this odd subject matter. I didn't quite know why, but it seemed to me that there are certain objects that contain telltale evidence of what we're about . . . But I *wasn't* interested in trying to explain or give answers so much as trying to present these objects so that they might be evocative in an existential sense."

Thiebaud's method demands a Zenlike willingness to empty out one's mind and give a pebble or a tree or a bucket of water—or a cake—its full, unique weight as a thing. It has the effect not of eliminating the Pop resonance of his subjects but of slowing down and chastening the associations they evoke, so that a host of ambivalent feelings—nostalgic and satiric and elegiac—can come back later, calmed down and contemplative: *enlightened*. The leisureliness and length and many-sidedness of his regard are what distinguish it most significantly from Pop proper, where the point was always to insist that object and subject couldn't be pulled apart. (In a Lichtenstein comic-book picture, for example, the graphic clarity and the absurd subject and the Art Nouveau outlines all hit you in one blinding, strobe-lit moment. Thiebaud's pictures, by contrast, unfold.)



Thiebaud was forty when he found his subject and method. Before that, he had lived an agreeably pragmatic-sounding life in small towns throughout northern California, taking up the kinds of work—art direction, cartooning, sign painting—that are still available to people who want to make a living describing things. He absorbed the cartoonist's feeling for scribble, the crosshatched studiousness of the illustrator, the art director's formulas for glamour, and let them inflect his virtuoso, traditional technique. When he exhibited his first cake pictures and pie pictures in New York, in a famous show at the Allan Stone Gallery, in 1962, the result was almost like the Picasso circle's discovery of Le Douanier Rousseau. Thiebaud's dead-serious, lyric realism was taken as satire, and his probing isolation of his objects as a way of jeering at them. (Thomas Hess wrote in *ARTnews*, "Looking at these pounds of slabby New Taste Sensation, one hears the artist screaming at us from behind the paintings, urging us to become hermits: to leave the new Gomorrah where layer cakes troop down air-conditioned shelving like cholesterol angels, to flee to the desert and eat locusts and pray for faith. [He] preaches revulsion by isolating the American food habit.")

Pretty soon, though, even the critics began to see that Thiebaud was not a satirist, or not simply a satirist, and once that was perceived he began to slip, if not from sight, at least from notoriety. Since then, he has painted, in addition to more cakes, pies, and other desserts, full-length, almost life-size portraits of self-contained, imperturbable Californians; overlush flower pictures (when Thiebaud's luxuriant, animating touch is applied to a subject that is itself luxuriant, the effect is overripe); and, best of all, vertiginous views of idealized California streets and freeways, which are like a combination of David Hockney and Piranesi.

It is for the rapt contemplation of a few objects, and for his high-hearted, ambivalent love of them, however, that Thiebaud is most likely to be remembered. The seemingly flat and neutral titles of the pictures that are from the same period as "Cakes" ring equally with affection and with a helpless humor: "Three Cold Creams," "Four Pinball Machines," "Strawberry Cone," "Three Lipsticks," "Pies, Pies, Pies"—a vision of the biggest potlatch there has ever been, which looks at some moments like a garden of earthly delights and at others like a wasteland, depending on the light. Thiebaud paints a bleached-out, glaring, standardized America through which little shimmers of serenity pass as suddenly as breezes. He looks at his cafeteria counters and window displays as though these workaday arrangements of things had been set in order by a god of manufacture, not to be sold or desired but just to be looked at. It seems unlikely that anyone will take inventory of our overabundant mid-century larder with a happier eye, or from a more sober perspective.

—Adam Gopnik

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REFLECTIONS

THE USES OF FORCE

FROM the first, President Bush saw Iraq's invasion of Kuwait as a challenge and an opportunity. It was a chance to reassert American power in unmistakable terms and to put an American stamp on a set of ground rules for a "new world order" of the nineteen-nineties. Administration officials worried that failure to use American military power in a just cause, blessed by the United Nations, at a time when the Soviet Union was immobilized by its domestic turmoil would confirm the pessimistic judgments of the "declinists"—those at home and abroad who spoke of the United States as if it were a fading empire. But with the collapse of the Warsaw Pact the United States was now indisputably the world's greatest military power, and it quickly became the Administration's credo that the nation must exhibit that willingness to resort to war which is the ultimate foundation of diplomacy, law, and the political order itself.

By the rules of international politics, to mobilize for war is to choose war unless the adversary backs down; the "credibility" of a nation depends on its not acquiring a reputation for making empty threats. Thus, however remote an actual war in the desert may have seemed at the beginning of the crisis, at some point last fall the President was propelled, partly by his rhetoric and his diplomacy but mostly by the huge mobilization itself, to hand over the choice of war or peace to Saddam Hussein. Once the United Nations Security Council had authorized the use of force and Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney had told the troops in Saudi Arabia that they were about to go into combat, the collision in the Gulf, as the President himself repeatedly declared, could be averted only by a last-minute, total retreat of Hussein's forces from Kuwait. The teen-age game of chicken was being played out in a global arena, with bombers and tanks instead of souped-up cars, and Hussein would crash if he did not swerve.

To enlist public support, the President invoked Hitler's ghost and the shame of Munich, saying, in effect, that threatening war—and, if need be, going to war—was the last, best hope of restraining overarmed and overambitious nations in a world no longer kept in check by the fear of an American-Soviet nuclear conflict. But whether the massive bombing of Iraq and the land war to drive Hussein from Kuwait and to destroy his military might will usher in a new world order or escalate a new disorder remains to be seen. The five-month military confrontation in the Gulf culminating in a spasm of desert warfare is certain to become the first "lesson" on the uses of force in the post-Cold War world.

The Gulf War will exert a particularly powerful influence on political thinking in the United States, because it comes at a time of uncertainty about fundamental strategy and direction for the country. The year 1990 was Year Zero of the post-Cold War world. Within the United States government, the events of the first half of that extraordinary year—the collapse of the Communist superpower, the end of any plausible possibility that Europe could be invaded from the East, and the rising demand for a "peace dividend" among Americans who felt exhausted by forty-four years of Cold War—had already created a crisis of leadership. Suddenly, the United States had to rethink a strategy of almost fifty years and fashion a new role for itself. All over Washington, military bureaucracies, defense contractors, and think tanks were at work on new ideas, strategies, and theories for the post-Cold War world. But the President stoutly resisted "the vision thing," preferring, it seemed, to let events develop before he announced a new American foreign policy. Then Hussein decided to help himself to Kuwait.

"Of course you're going to be depressed if you keep comparing yourself with successful people."

In the first weeks of the crisis, the President expressed a certain pride that the rapid American-organized response to the menacing Iraqi dictator showed that the United States, as the world's largest national economy and foremost military power, still had a unique role to play. No other nation could have stepped in and brought into being the global political and military operation that the United States began to put together last August. But, while some strategists and columnists took satisfaction from this indisputable fact and noted that the American Century was far from over, many Americans felt distinctly uneasy, because (among other reasons) the United States was bearing a disproportionate share of the cost and risk. Retired military leaders and former

Secretaries of Defense speculated publicly that the United States contingents in the desert would take ninety per cent of the casualties suffered by the multinational force. To many Americans, such a consequence of war would be neither a badge of honor nor an indication of national grandeur but one more example of a uniquely generous nation being outwitted by foreigners. Supplying a large army to protect access to oil for America's competitors was not an inspiring national mission, and, despite the widely acknowledged brutality of Hussein's aggression, the President had difficulty articulating a more compelling mission until he ordered the attack. Instantly, public support for the President rose; the war had become its own justification.

The Gulf crisis arrived at a moment when none of the roles that the United States had fashioned for itself over the last half century quite fitted the emerging new order. The United States was no longer the defender of Europe. Soviet troops in the former East Germany were deserting, and the Soviet Union was coming apart. American divisions stationed in Germany left for the Gulf, and it was virtually certain that many would not return to Europe. No one was suggesting that United States military contingents could play any constructive role if Moscow staged a major crackdown on the six republics seeking independence, or if the Soviet Union broke apart in civil war.

Nor did the role of defender of the Free World make sense anymore. The unifying theme for this loose association of free—and distinctly unfree—nations was fear of Communism rather than a passion for democracy, and the defense of capitalism had been so successful, thanks to the spectacular failures of socialism, that except for a few holdouts, like Cuba, every government wanted to join the Free World. The leadership role of the United States had depended on its ability to spend with abandon, but its influence over the new world order would require a much more careful use of resources than had become a habit in the Cold War years.

Basic rethinking of strategic choices was long overdue; clearly, the strongest pressures for a redefinition of the American role in the world were economic constraints. The end of the Cold War coincided with the sudden realization that the Reagan prosperity bubble was about to pop. Junk bonds plummeted. Banks closed. Donald Trump was fighting off bankruptcy, and yuppie millionaires were becoming an endangered species. Homelessness, unemployment, collapsing bridges, failing schools, and the nation's extraordinary homicide rate were on the front pages. As a major recession threatened, it seemed that American society was about to experience another round of self-examination—the first since the civil-rights movement and the struggles over the Vietnam War in the nineteen-sixties and early seventies. The boosterism that had become Ronald Reagan's hallmark was no longer in vogue. (He and his political cohorts had regularly dismissed those who worried about the failures of American industry, the state of American education, or the inadequacies of the health-care system as "prophets of gloom and doom" and members in good standing of the "blame America first" crowd.) As the era of feel-good politics ended, the United States found itself the world's No. 1 debtor nation and a land of diminished expectations, especially for the middle class.

The two great undebated questions of the Cold War years—the interrelationship of military spending and national economic health, and the size and character of America's "world responsibilities"—were appearing on the national political agenda for the first time in many years, but the debate had barely begun before Hussein moved. There is a danger that the decisions made in response to Hussein will sweep the country into a new global role without its having taken a serious look at either the consequences or the available alternatives. What has happened in the Gulf makes the long-postponed debate on United States foreign policy more urgent than ever. At the heart of the debate is the role of military power in achieving security and well-being in a new era of world politics.

DURING the first six months of 1990, a number of books and articles appearing in the United States suggested a much diminished role for military force in world affairs. Francis Fukuyama, then a State Department official, published a neo-Hegelian "end of history" thesis—arguing, so it was understood, that the death of Communism had resulted in the triumph of capitalism and democracy, and so all the conflicts in the world worth fight-

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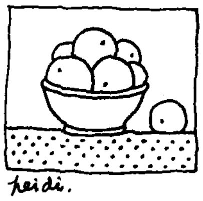
ing about had ended; if war was not actually a thing of the past, it was going to become much less of a factor in human affairs. A number of writers on military strategy noted that economic strength was becoming a more important determinant of national power than the ability to project military force. One such writer, Edward Luttwak, who had a hawkish reputation, observed that the “methods of commerce are displacing military methods,” and that the “decay of the military grammar of geopolitics” was central to an understanding of contemporary world politics. In 1989, John Mueller, a professor of political science at the University of Rochester, had published “Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War,” which concluded that war among the advanced nations was so counterproductive as an instrument of national policy that it was unlikely to recur. The Charter of Paris—the concluding statement of the Conference on Security and Coöperation in Europe, held last November, which proclaimed the beginning of a new era of peace and unity in Europe and the end of the Cold War—reflected this optimistic assessment. Former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last December that the charter confirmed the reality that “modern military technologies have made war between the Great Powers an unacceptable instrument of political change.”



So powerful did the emerging consensus on the obsolescence of war appear to be that Pentagon analysts worried about the future of the armed forces. The handwriting had been on the wall for several years—even before *perestroika* led to the end of the Cold War. The annual military budget of the United States had shot past the three-hundred-billion-dollar mark in the Reagan era, but by the summer of 1990 it had been declining in real terms for four years. To be sure, the spending race had exhausted the Soviet Union; the challenge of advanced technology—the intermediate-range ballistic missiles deployed in Germany and the Star Wars missile-defense system—may, indeed, have had an important role in persuading Mikhail Gorbachev to end the Cold War. (This view, held by Reagan’s admirers, is shared by some Soviet observers.) But it was evident that the expense of the arms race had also taken its toll of the United States. In a time of reduced tension, the American people would demand drastic cuts in the military budget. The cumulative effects of many years of inadequate investment—in industrial restructuring and technological innovation, in the removal of toxic wastes and other urgent environmental projects, in public infrastructure and services such as schools, child care, housing, and health care—and the failure to confront poverty and crime rates far worse than those of any other advanced industrial nation would generate pressures for a shift to a peace economy even greater than those which usually follow a successful war.

From the start, however, the public mood that greeted the post-Cold War order was cautious; there was little euphoria of the sort that emerged briefly after the defeat of Germany in 1918 and the collapse of the Axis powers in 1945. The chances of war among the advanced industrial powers seemed smaller than they had at any time since the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, and the rapidly rising economic giants, Germany and Japan, went out of their way to avoid any suggestion of military ambition—refusing, in fact, to send combat troops to Saudi Arabia when American politicians encouraged them to do so. Since no Hitler, Stalin, or other plausible world conqueror appeared to be waiting in the wings, the American people, the polls suggested, had little interest in policing the new world order. In a July, 1990, Gallup Poll, in answer to the question “What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today?” only one per cent of the respondents mentioned foreign policy. Questions like this, which have been asked in one form or another for fifty years, are used as a rough “isolationism index,” and by this measure the isolationist mood had not been so strong since the immediate aftermath of the Second World War.

But the Soviet danger was no sooner declared over than official warnings about new threats were issued by the White House and the Pentagon. George Bush proclaimed the new American enemy to be “instability,” a vague but ominous political-science metaphor. Pentagon planners concluded that in a number of ways the world of 1990 was more dangerous than the familiar frozen landscape of the Cold War era. The revolutions of Eastern Europe and the belated efforts at reform within the Soviet Union were tearing the eastern half of Europe apart even as it was being reattached to the West. Not only the Yalta agreements but also the Versailles Treaty had become a casualty of the Cold War victory: Woodrow Wilson’s experiments in nation-building—Yugoslavia among them—threatened to perish along with Lenin’s socialist imperium. As 1991 began, Gorbachev and his increasingly angry rivals warned of civil war. American generals expressed public concern about the fate of the more than thirty thousand nuclear warheads on Soviet soil.

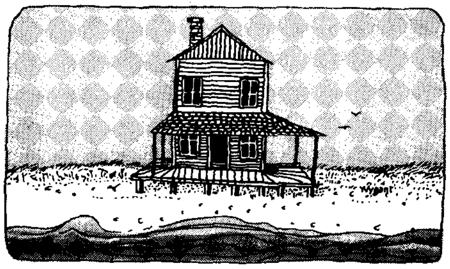
The nation’s military services immediately set about rethinking their roles in the post-Cold War world. By mid-1990, each service had published its analysis of the new national-security threats to the United States, and, not surprisingly, these provided little support for the obsolescence-of-war thesis. Three months before the invasion of Kuwait, General A. M. Gray, the commandant of the Marine Corps, wrote that the “underdeveloped world’s growing dissatisfaction over the gap between rich and poor nations” and the development of “regional power vacuums that could result in instability and conflict,” together with “our growing dependency on Africa’s strategic mineral resources” and the need for unimpeded access to “developing economic markets throughout the world,” were creating more difficult and extensive military requirements than had existed during the Cold War. Indeed, he echoed the warning of Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger that Americans would soon feel nostalgia for the Cold War days. After noting that “no longer will we have the luxury of focussing the majority of our defense efforts on a single threat or a single region of the world,” General Gray declared that the United States must now maintain “a credible military power projection capability with the flexibility to respond to conflict across the spectrum of violence throughout the globe.” Because the interests of the United States and its Cold War allies could be expected to diverge, the United States would have a greater need "for forces capable of responding unilaterally."

That in itself would pose a formidable military challenge, requiring, as General Gray pointed out, "mobile and versatile forces" in a high state of readiness for "raids, security operations, limited-objective operations, mobile training team employment . . . show-of-force operations . . . psychological warfare, deception operations . . . specialized demolition operations . . . and in-extremis hostage rescue operations." But maintaining such forces in a time of mounting budget deficits, when there would be "less available funding," was obviously a greater challenge than it had been in the days when money was seemingly no object. The General said of economizing, "Solid business principles tell us to capitalize on complementary robustness, avoid unnecessary duplication and specialization, and increase the quality of our forces while reducing their quantity." But it would be foolishly expensive to make changes in the roles and missions of the armed forces, he added, "until and unless a more stabilized era emerges."

Carl E. Vuono, the chief of staff of the United States Army, in a paper published in January of 1990 and entitled "A Strategic Force for the 1990s and Beyond," warned that the new Army must be ready for such "complex and dangerous challenges" as "terrorism, trafficking in illicit drugs, proliferation of sophisticated weaponry in potentially hostile developing nations, and regional instability that threatens democratic regimes." The Army would have "an increasingly important" role in restoring order to "trouble spots" around the world, and would need extensive rapid-deployment capabilities for this role, he wrote. These trouble spots would be more troublesome than ever before, because "at least a dozen developing countries have more than 1,000 main battle tanks, and several of these nations have more tanks than our Army has in its active units in Europe." He went on, "Portable anti-aircraft and antitank missiles are widespread and have been used with great effectiveness in Afghanistan and Africa. A number of developing states are acquiring modern fighter and attack aircraft, giving them significant long-range strike capabilities."

In June of 1990, in a white paper subtitled "Global Reach—Global Power," the United States Air Force, after making a no less gloomy prediction than its sister services about the growing threats to the United States' "vital interests" and "national security" around the world, concluded that the Air Force "offers, in most cases, the quickest, longest range, leading edge force available to the President." Air power "offers exceptional flexibility across the spectrum of conflict as an instrument of national resolve," the white paper declared. "The Air Force can deter, deliver a tailored response, or punch hard when required—over great distances—with quick response."

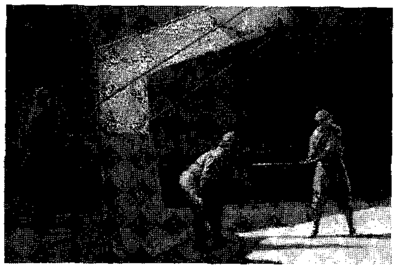
THE pessimistic note struck by the heads of the uniformed services in their official speculations about the nineteen-nineties had the ring of truth to it. Even the threat of nuclear war, arising either from civil strife in the Soviet Union or from the next round of Arab-Israeli confrontations in the Middle East or from a future India-Pakistan conflict, is more plausible today than it was at the height of the Cold War, when the prospect of a nuclear Armageddon sent an entire generation of American schoolchildren scurrying under their desks to "duck and cover." At stake in these areas are life-and-death issues far more complex and emotionally charged than the largely symbolic and ideological issues that were at the heart of the long proxy war fought between the United States and the Soviet Union. But the Pentagon analyses betrayed the weakness for hyperbole that military bureaucracies traditionally exhibit, especially at budget time. This propensity for dramatization, to which Presidents are especially subject when they act as Commanders-in-Chief, takes two forms. One is the enlargement of the enemy. Thus, Saddam Hussein, the leader of a poor, import-dependent, and blockaded country, becomes Adolf Hitler. The second is a tendency to overstate the results that can be achieved by firepower—not just victory, the only discussable outcome of an American war, but what victory will mean. There is no mission too difficult or too costly, provided only that Congress votes enough money and the public does not flinch from the bloody business of keeping the peace in a dangerous world.



The chief of staff of the Army wrote in early 1990 that "a renaissance in our thinking about war" had taken place, but so far there have been few signs that the end of the Cold War has stimulated any basic change in strategic thinking inside the Pentagon about the roles or missions of the armed forces. The statements that the chiefs of staff of the Army, the Air Force, the Navy, and the Marine Corps issued before the Gulf crisis but after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact could, except for sections that note a somewhat reduced Soviet threat, have been written at almost any time during the Cold War years.

Indeed, the crisis so far has been used to vindicate the most timeworn ideas about war as an instrument of national policy. Only overwhelming force can resolve a clash of national interests; the threat of force is the indispensable underpinning of successful diplomacy, and the threat must be carried out if the enemy proves obdurate. The object of war, once it has begun, is to destroy the enemy's military capability and permit the victor to establish the conditions of peace. The United States is the only nation with the resources and the geographical position to threaten and carry out military operations on a global scale. It is the only country with an economy big enough and flexible enough to absorb the costs. The willingness of the people to keep paying the costs is a problem, but if bold and effective leadership can convince them that the only alternative to an American-organized world order is the disorder of terrorists, fanatics, and demagogues ever ready to mobilize the world's poor against the rich, the American people will assume their "world responsibilities."

It was relatively easy for those strategists committed to preserving the military establishment at something close to Cold War levels to caricature the obsolescence-of-war theorists, on the ground that they had little really new to offer. The prediction that advances in lethal technology would end war was shown to be a poor bet at the time the crossbow, the most lethal weapon of the late Middle Ages, was invented. The hypertrophy-of-war thesis became



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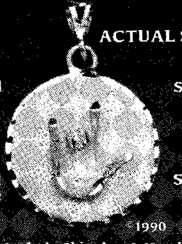

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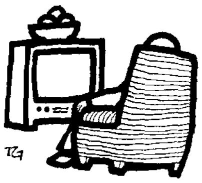
fashionable again in the first decade of the twentieth century, when a number of European writers—notably Norman Angell, in his best-seller "The Great Illusion"—predicted the carnage that would result from a great war in Europe and expressed the belief that war had become so irrational that it would not happen. The impressive advances in the technology of aerial bombardment in the interwar period persuaded writers a generation later that a second world war was inconceivable. During the Cold War, a number of strategists, including some senior United States military officers, put forth the thesis that military power had lost its Clausewitzian rationale. In the nuclear age, war was no longer "the continuation of politics by other means," for the means would destroy everything, including politics. The bomb defied strategy. The only hope of peace rested on avoiding war through an increasingly fragile balance of terror. "A nuclear war cannot be won," a reborn Ronald Reagan kept repeating in his latter White House days, "and must never be fought." Some said that military power was now "unusable" for achieving traditional political purposes. Even Dwight Eisenhower, the nation's most famous twentieth-century general, declared during his Presidency that there was "no longer any alternative to peace."



But Raymond Aron was closer to the mark when he wrote in his memoirs last year that "our century, in fact, presents simultaneously the most varied forms of combat, from the terrorist act to carpet bombing—war has never been so polymorphous, it has never been so omnipresent." The neo-Clausewitzians, bent on rehabilitating war and restoring it to its honorable estate in the affairs of men, called President Eisenhower naïve, and pointed out that Reagan's belated discovery of the practical limitations of nuclear weapons only proved their supreme importance. Far from being "unusable," the warheads topping the missiles in their silos and in the bomb bays of the B-52s were actually used every day, not just to dissuade some future fiend in the Kremlin, or wherever, from blowing up New York but to put a chill on lesser ambitions. Moreover, the umbrella of nuclear protection under which many of the other non-Communist industrial nations were gathered was rented at a stiff price. The protection was offered to governments only as long as they did not veer too far from centrist politics in organizing their domestic economies. Germany and Japan, as they grew in economic might, felt pressed to make concessions in economic and financial policy urged upon them by their protector.

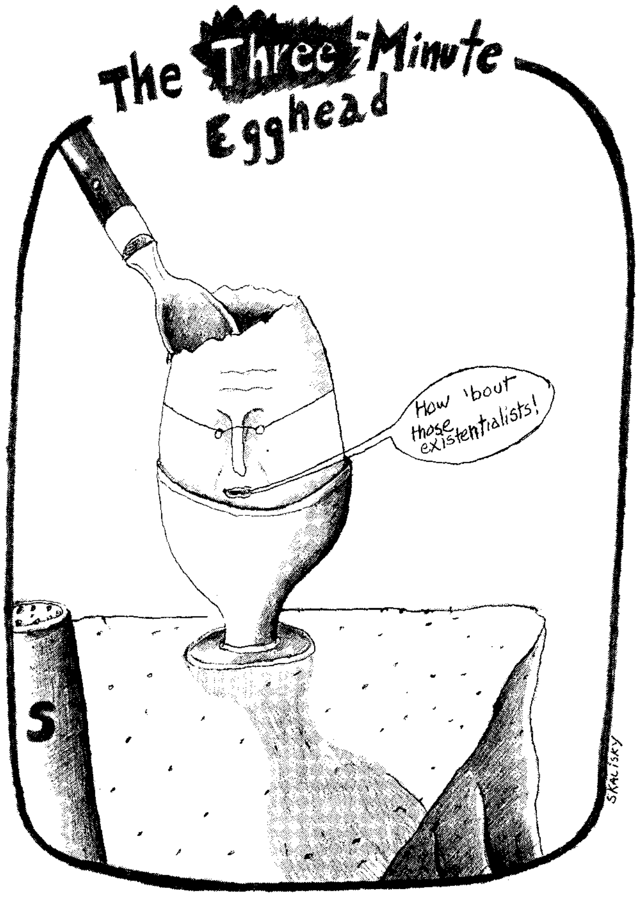
It was widely argued that the existence of nuclear stockpiles kept a lid on violence—that there would have been more frequent and bloodier wars if such weapons had never been invented—but that is not an easy argument to sustain. The world of nuclear weapons is quite hospitable to conventional war. America's longest war—for forty-four years, United States forces were engaged in combat somewhere in the world almost every year—coincided with Western Europe's long peace. So did more than a hundred and twenty-five wars fought in the Cold War years on the periphery of the industrial world, and in them more than twenty-five million people died. The bomb did not deter the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe, the Chinese invasion of Tibet, the Indian seizure of Goa, the massacre of East Timor, the three-year Korean War, the twenty-nine-year Indo-China War, the invasion of Afghanistan, or the eight-year Iran-Iraq War.

Nor is there any evidence that if it had not been for the bomb the Soviets would have struck either against Europe or against the United States. Despite the remarkable recent outpouring of self-criticism from scholars and political figures in the Soviet Union dedicated to exorcising every ghost of Stalinism, nothing has yet come to light suggesting that Stalin or his successors ever considered an attack on Germany or a nuclear first strike against the West. Nikita Khrushchev's missile-rattling rhetoric is no more persuasive evidence of the contrary than John Foster Dulles's somewhat more subtle formulations, and Dulles, after all, when he talked about "going to the brink" and resorting to "massive retaliation" against non-nuclear provocations, was speaking in behalf of a power that had dropped two atomic bombs on population centers.

The obsolescence-of-war thesis stands on two additional legs. The processes of global interdependence make war increasingly irrational. Nations that trade with one another have no reason to go to war and have obvious reasons to preserve the political links and physical infrastructure on which flourishing commerce depends. This argument is even more plausible now that the major economic actors—corporations, banks, insurers, and the like—are global in their operations and, to a growing extent, stateless in their outlook. The bonds of peace are becoming stronger as the world economy becomes more closely integrated. All true. But the nations of the world are not being integrated into the new global economy at the same rate or on the same terms (the World Bank estimates that of the world's 5.2 billion people virtually one in every six is "chronically malnourished"), and the impulse across the planet to assert and to preserve cultural diversity and local autonomy is a strong force opposing global integration. Indeed, in many ways the processes of integration are exacerbating differences in economic status, prestige, and influence which have historically been breeding grounds of war. Nor is interdependence always advantageous; it can be burdensome, or even humiliating.

The third leg of the argument is that democracies are peace-loving and by and large do not make war against one another, and since democracy is on the rise around the world the prospect of war is declining. There is something to this, but the argument is too simple. Most of the aspiring democracies of Eastern Europe and Latin America do not fit the model of bourgeois societies comfortable with the status quo. And as older democracies like the United States resort to secrecy and domestic propaganda in the name of national security, democratic restraints on war-making weaken. Actually, the democracies of Western Europe and the United States are the nations that have fought most of the wars in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East over the last hundred years. In these vast, largely underdeveloped reaches of the planet, which happen to contain much of the world's mineral wealth, "instability" is endemic, and therefore, according to Pentagon analyses, they are the most likely sites of future wars. Modern democracy has flowered in the age of industrialization, and the industrial machine is a devourer of resources. Democracies have often gone to war in the name of preserving or extending democracy. Pentagon planners now write that the world's most powerful democracy must plan on going to war in the future to preserve access to the resources that make industrial democracy possible. (Early in the buildup for the Gulf War, President Bush told the American people that the show of force was necessary to protect the American way of life and to guarantee American jobs—euphemisms for cheap oil.)

Antiwar sentiment among voters inhibits national leaders in the resort to violence, but plainly it is not a bar to war. If a war goes badly—that is, if it lasts longer, involves more casualties, achieves less decisive results than the public expects—both the leaders and the armed forces eventually feel the effects. Presidents are punished for unpopular wars: Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson picked up so many signals of public unhappiness with the stalemated Korean and Vietnam Wars that neither dared to run for reëlection. The military forces risk being punished by finding themselves isolated and cut off from the civil society, as happened in the Vietnam era. The Weinberger Doctrine—a statement by Caspar Weinberger, who served as Secretary of Defense in the Reagan Administration, that the military services will not fight wars the American people do not support—sets limits on the size and character of wars, but once war begins, these limits may not be observed. When President Bush ordered American forces into battle on January 16th, the country was divided, and congressional support was far from overwhelming.



THE argument for avoiding war which is most persuasive to the new generation of post-Cold War strategists is that orgies of destruction, though they are often good for business in the short run, destroy the links on which an advanced global market economy depends. The victors, having gone to great expense to destroy their enemies, must spend yet more money to rehabilitate them, as the United States did at the end of the Second World War. Countries reduced to smoking ruins, especially in the industrialized world, are a drag on the world economy. The realities of interdependence have enlarged the boomerang effects of war. Destruction visited on others produces consequences for the architects of the destruction; the demography of the United States has been transformed by the flow of refugees from Southeast Asia and Central America in the aftermath of bloody Cold War battles, some fought with American forces, more with American arms. The public-health and ecological effects of nuclear-weapons production are not easily calculable, but there is growing evidence that they are substantial. The impact of prolonged war on the fragile ecology of the Horn of Africa and the global consequences of this ecological disaster are potentially devastating, although it is a subject that only obscure committees of the United Nations, some valiant relief agencies, and a handful of scholars ever address. The dimensions of the catastrophe that the Gulf War has visited upon the ecology of the Middle East and the human and economic consequences for the region and for the world have yet to be comprehended.

It is now becoming clear that the strategy for avoiding what Pentagon strategists called "central war" between the United States and the Soviet Union was based in part on the proliferation of high-technology weapons among regimes on the periphery of the Soviet Union. Some of this proliferation was brought about in the name of classic defense, more in the name of political "containment," but in recent years increasing proportions of the planes, tanks, and missiles were shipped from the arms factories of the developed world to the Third World, and were really public-works and export-promotion programs for nations with employment and balance-of-payments problems. The containment of the Soviet Union called for the transfer of tens of billions of dollars' worth of advanced lethal technology to nations on its periphery, and by the end of the Cold War the Soviet Union was more than keeping pace with the United States in arms deliveries. The consequence was a more even distribution of lethal technology around the planet, and now, as the economic gap between haves and have-nots widens, the gap between their capacities for killing is closing. "Central war" may indeed be obsolete, but "war on the periphery" is alive and well, in large measure because of the strategy for winning (and losing) the Cold War.

One lesson that Operation Desert Storm will almost certainly teach future military dictators is that the military-technology gap must be closed. Without a radical change in the industrial nations' arms-transfer policies, and international control of the arms market, a new generation of strongmen can count on the greed of arms merchants and the extraordinary shortsightedness of weapons-producing nations—especially in bad times, when the market for other exports is sluggish—to help them become more formidable enemies of the proposed new world order.

In the flush of victory after just a hundred hours of ground war, President Bush declared that the experience in the Gulf had "kicked" the "Vietnam syndrome," by which he meant that the nation was no longer hobbled by public opinion from resorting to war when the President calls for war. The victors suffered amazingly few casualties, and for almost a month it seemed that the United States had fought the first war that had worked since the Second World War. A central-casting villain had been taught a lesson. High principles had been defended; future aggressors would not be so quick to annex other nations and extinguish their very existence, as Saddam Hussein had tried to do with Kuwait. Patriot missiles and "smart bombs" shown on television restored faith in American technology, and the heavily censored news reporting created the impression that this was a relatively bloodless encounter between highly accurate bombs and military targets. Most of the human beings on the screen were Iraqi soldiers overjoyed at their capture. The war pushed divisive domestic American problems off the front pages, and the overwhelming majority of citizens, according to the polls, felt a surge of national pride. The other members of the victorious coalition were paying most of the costs, and American companies were rewarded for American leadership in rescuing Kuwait with the vast majority of the hundred billion dollars in reconstruction contracts. The President had risked his political future and, so it seems, won a more lopsided victory even than General Norman Schwarzkopf's triumph on the battlefield. The American people, it was widely repeated on television, were energized and unified by the war. Some pundits rejoiced (and a few feared) that Americans were now ready to support more high-tech combat in other trouble spots in the pursuit of world order.

A month after the ceasefire in the Gulf, proclaimed by President Bush, peace was turning into a nightmare. The oil fields of Kuwait were still aflame, and the ecological damage was severe. A United Nations team reported "near-apocalyptic destruction" in Iraq. The Washington *Post* ascertained that seventy per cent of the thousands of tons of bombs dropped on that country had missed their intended targets, and that the estimates of Iraqi military and civilian casualties were in the hundreds of thousands. With the encouragement of the United States, Kurds and Shiites rose up against the beleaguered Iraqi leader, and General Schwarzkopf's forces sat by, as ordered, while Hussein's victims were slaughtered by the thousands. A million or more refugees tried to make their way to Iran or Turkey. The Emir of Kuwait, whose restoration to power had been a principal war aim, showed none of the ardor for democracy he had proclaimed during his exile, and the Bush Administration watched as the liberated kingdom settled back into its prewar tribal order. American diplomatic efforts notwithstanding, a new security arrangement for Israel and the Palestinians appeared remote. Saddam Hussein, his offensive capabilities seriously damaged, remained in power. Despite the military success and the terrible human cost, most of the political aims for which the war was ostensibly fought seemed as elusive as ever.

THROUGH the centuries, war has been a tale of infinite surprise—that is why people find war so fascinating. The test of arms is a gamble, and somebody always loses, but when the smoke of battle clears, the identity of the real winner is not always obvious. In this century, the ironies of war are particularly striking. The Great War, having demanded the slaughter of millions of young men, left the European victors scarcely better off than defeated Germany. Anthony Eden's ill-fated invasion of Egypt in 1956 to recover control of the Suez Canal signalled the end of the British Empire. Leonid Brezhnev's rash decision to invade Afghanistan in the name of preserving "stability" undermined the last shred of legitimacy left to the Communist Party hard-liners. More than a million soldiers rotated through the war zone and brought back reports that utterly discredited the official propaganda. Public anger over the war helped build support for *perestroika* and the end of the Brezhnev political order. Vietnam, poor, isolated, ideologically torn, has yet to recover from its victory in its twenty-nine-year war against the West, just as the United States has yet to recover from its loss of that war. Saddam Hussein, to protect his flank in his new war with the Americans, felt compelled to hand back all he took from Iran in a war that cost a million lives.

The "mellowing" of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev has until the last few months appeared to be an almost total vindication of the United States' Cold War policies. The abandonment of Communism and the loosening—even the breakup—of the Soviet Union have been American strategic objectives for almost fifty years. But civil war, bloody repression, and the reassertion of dictatorial government are now distinct possibilities, casting a dark shadow over the prospects for global peace and economic progress. The Cold War victory could turn out to be the supreme irony of the century, and historians may well conclude that the real victors of the great global struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union were Germany and Japan.

ANTIQUES
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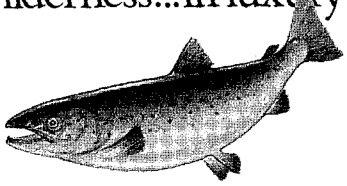
For the United States, the Second World War stands out as the great exception—"the good war," against two evil empires, which ended in unambiguous victory. The courage and skill demonstrated on the battlefield, the miracles of logistics and production wrought by the armed forces and the war industry, and the uncompromising pursuit of "unconditional surrender" were handsomely rewarded. The war pulled the American economy up from depression to the greatest prosperity any country's economy has ever known, at a cost in lives that was considerably less than the losses suffered by the other belligerents. At the war's end, the United States emerged as the only undamaged power, the world's banker, the sole possessor of the atomic bomb, and the producer of half of the world's goods. The American Century—somewhat foreshortened, to be sure—was the creation of that war, and this reality has shaped the attitudes of the last seven Presidents, all of whom served in it.

For many Americans of the Second World War generation, the victory over Hitler and Tojo symbolized the power of war to cut the Gordian knot—to resolve political, economic, and moral problems simultaneously. This collective memory of "the good war" created its own problems, most notably the serious political tension that existed in the United States all during the Cold War. If Communism was "Red Fascism," if Stalin and his successors were Hitlers in tunics and baggy pants, if the atomic bomb ended the Second World War, then why not victory now? Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan built their political careers asking such questions, and the fear of pressure from the right pushed Lyndon Johnson further and further into the quagmire of Southeast Asia. How the national-security establishment thinks about the uses of force is still strongly influenced by the myths of the Second World War.

The ironies of war—the unanticipated consequences of the test of arms, the unanticipated consequences of victory—have accelerated in the twentieth century as the objectives of war have become cloudier. Recent American wars have been fights to "educate" intransigent leaders, to deter future wars, to enhance "credibility," to stay at the top of the pecking order, and to maintain an advantageous status quo. Only small nations now fight wars of conquest. Large nations have more sophisticated means, including military means, of controlling territory they deem to be strategic.

When the Gulf War finally ends, it will become more evident that a balance of power to keep peace in the Middle East cannot be established by war. The dilemmas facing the architects of the war have become obvious. The choice, it seemed, was to destroy Saddam Hussein's regime and risk opening the way to the dismemberment of Iraq, to Iranian or Syrian domination of the region, to the spread of anti-Americanism throughout the Islamic world, and to the toppling of pro-American Arab regimes, or to sit by while Saddam Hussein slaughtered far more people in his own country than he had killed in Kuwait. The war to prevent a future war in the Middle East cannot succeed in its political objective unless the United States and the other powers can force a settlement of the explosive issues that have kept the region in a state of permanent war for almost fifty years. Why these issues should be easier to resolve after the war than before is not clear.

THE statements of the various chiefs of the United States military services greeting the new decade



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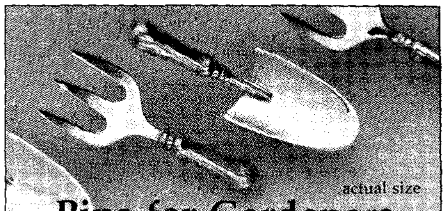

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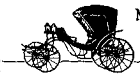

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and peering beyond into the new century do not take account of the remarkable ways in which the world has changed; indeed, they have a musty nineteenth-century aura. The military establishment everywhere is in the business of selling threats; without an enemy, there is no market for lethal skills or instruments of destruction. But transforming the ominous realities of contemporary international relations into military threats is much more difficult than it used to be. (A military threat, as I understand it, is a dangerous or unfavorable action taken by human beings which can be successfully prevented, opposed, or outflanked by the threat or the use of force.) General Gray, the commandant of the Marines, writes in the traditional language of geopolitics. The United States must have "unimpeded access" to "established and developing economic markets throughout the world," he says, and implies that this is a job for the Marines. But it clearly isn't. Japan has no marines ready to parachute into distant markets, no flotilla elbowing Matsushita's and Sony's way into the world's great shopping malls. The issue of markets is indeed basic to United States national security, but the problems the United States encounters in marketing its products are not military problems.

Nor can access to natural resources be secured at gunpoint, as it could in the last century. If one purpose of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm was to maintain low oil prices—as President Bush implied—then these efforts have failed; Earl Ravenal, a former Pentagon official, estimated before the attack on Iraq began that if the appropriate allocation of American military preparations were added to the price of a barrel of Middle East oil the cost of the barrel would be somewhere between a hundred and eighty and two hundred and eighty dollars. Military force is neither the cheapest nor the most secure means of maintaining access to the great majority of resources, which, with unimportant exceptions, are widely distributed around the globe. The dependence of the United States on raw materials to be obtained from poor, underdeveloped countries is not growing. There are few single sources for any vegetable or mineral essential to modern industrial civilization. Substitutes, including synthetic materials, are available for most resources that may, for one reason or another, be temporarily hard to get. (Not only vanilla but coffee is now being synthesized in laboratories.) For those few resources on which nations are needlessly and dangerously dependent—oil in particular—the threat from Iraq eleven years after the threat from Iran provides unmistakable evidence that a reduction of petroleum dependency is a much more intelligent and practical national-security policy than the build-up of a gas-guzzling war machine to coerce access to cheap oil. Yet as President Bush was ordering hundreds of thousands of young men and women to take up combat positions in the desert he could scarcely bring himself to utter the word "conservation," and even the Gulf crisis has not been enough to make alternative-energy development a national priority. The Rocky Mountain Institute, which specializes in technical studies of energy and its efficient use, estimates that the United States' dependence on Gulf oil could be eliminated by the investment of $20 billion in improving energy efficiency. (Current estimates of United States and coalition expenditures for the Gulf War range from $50 billion to $60 billion.)

In the late nineteen-eighties, the Soviet Union, pressed by mounting economic and social problems at home, began to rethink the value of its maintaining "influence" in Asia, Africa, and Latin America by military and paramilitary means. The United States, still deeply involved in military efforts in El Salvador and elsewhere, has yet to undertake a similar reconsideration. The costs of victory in Grenada, Panama, and Nicaragua have not yet been faced. These countries, torn and wrecked by internal struggle and by military interventions at the order of the last two Presidents of the United States, are in desperate need of expensive repairs, and the United States has the moral obligation to provide them but neither the financial wherewithal nor the political inclination. The destruction delivered to Iraq by the United States-led war machine is, of course, far greater, and both the financial and the political costs will mount.

In the Western Hemisphere, war-making power is a wasting asset for the United States. There are fewer political firebrands seeking power in Latin America by fulminating against the Colossus of the North than there were a few years ago, and armed revolutionary movements, though they are strong in Peru and a few other places, lack the power, and even the desire, to seize the state in the classic Leninist sense. Thus, the United States can no longer maintain its influence over Latin-American élites by acting as their defender against revolution; instead, its influence will depend primarily upon whether this nation is in a position to assist in the struggle for a stable political order based on ecologically sustainable development. None of the military services have a plan for such a battle.

Nor is the drug problem a military threat. In the headquarters of the Southern Command, in Panama City, the Counternarcotics Operation Center is preparing drug raids into Colombia, including, *Newsweek* reports, "plans to send American special forces to 'snatch' Colombian drug lords if President Bush gives the order." The Pentagon's "counternarcotics budget" climbed to more than a billion dollars this year. Air Force radar planes now spend forty per cent of their time on drug surveillance. But this expensive high-technology military operation is engaged in what William Bennett, the former head of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, calls a "hopeless task." To "go to the source," as military planners like to do, would involve a prolonged and most likely indecisive confrontation with sophisticated, well-armed criminals in Colombia or Peru or wherever coca can be grown, and that is almost anywhere. The United States Army has no warrant from the people of Latin America to chase their arch-criminals, and the people of either region are unlikely to have great patience with the casualties that would surely be involved. Two obvious roots of the drug problem are, first, the huge financial incentives to grow or synthesize the ingredients of illegal drugs and, second, the complex economic, social, and psychological reasons that people in the United States need to consume something like half the world's illegal-drug supply. Controlling drugs is not a job for the armed forces.

WHAT, then, are the uses of organized force in world politics? The first is the defense of a nation's home territory from external attack. In the nuclear age, this objective can never be completely achieved. Every nation, including the United States, is becoming increasingly vulnerable to long-range missiles and terrorist attacks, and, thanks to ill-advised national-security decisions in the past, the number of potential enemies in possession of such capabilities is rising. Physical defense against their attacks is problematical; neither global nuclear retaliatory forces nor defensive forces in and around a nation's home territory can actually shield people and property from destruction once this kind of attacker decides to move. In an increasingly chaotic world, a defense based on preëmptive strikes against suspected nuclear or chemical facilities (in Iraq or wherever) is a recipe for permanent war. Some sort of modest Star Wars missile setup and greatly expanded intelligence operations on American soil to sniff out potential terrorists might reduce the threat. But the financial cost of even making the effort to deploy a missile defense would be astronomical, and an expanded anti-terrorist effort would pose an extremely serious threat to the civil liberties of all Americans.

"That was extremely empowering, Terry—I believe I'll have another."

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The United States is in the enviable position of having no threatening neighbor on its borders, so the risk of a major attack is low. Defending against a Canadian or a Mexican, or even a Cuban, invasion would appear to be a modest task. The extent to which the United States will continue to depart from its earlier tradition of distrust of large standing armies depends upon the other roles the United States armed forces will be expected to play. All through the Cold War years, the United States relied heavily on the idea of "forward defense"—a ring of bases around the world, and deployments of troops on every continent. But time is running out for many of these bases—in Germany, in the Philippines, and in other places—as the idea of "power projection" by wealthy, white industrial nations comes under increasing challenge from nationalist forces in every part of the world. (Because memories in the former colonial world are long, the fact that the United States is becoming less white, less wealthy, and less industrial will not be much help in this regard.) As local communities in the United States are threatened with the loss of lucrative military installations, there will be rising domestic political pressures to close the foreign bases instead. And, as financial pressures also mount, the United States will be forced to make choices about when and where it will dispatch its military forces, when it will act alone in behalf of an American vision of international order, and for what purposes it will act. Only after these crucial political choices have been made will it be possible to decide intelligently how large its forces should be. For both economic and political reasons, the United States has a strong interest in supporting the development of a genuinely defensive force under United Nations command; unilateral intervention has become so expensive and so contrary to emerging sensibilities around the world that its negative effects are prohibitive.

Nuclear stockpiles will have to be maintained at some level until there is a radically different consciousness in the world about weapons of mass destruction. The United States has every reason to make the promotion of that different understanding about what nuclear weapons really are the urgent priority of its foreign policy. But, whatever the progress in that direction, there is no good political or technical reason for the present nuclear powers to make or test a single additional nuclear warhead, and there are many good reasons to stop. Production and testing involve health hazards, and only if the United States and the Soviet Union end their own acquisition of nuclear weapons will they be in a position to press other nations to desist from developing or acquiring nuclear weapons and to accept a thoroughgoing system of inspection. (Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty makes this link between the obligations of the nuclear haves and those of the nuclear have-nots explicit.) Nuclear proliferation is the most serious military threat to the security of the United States not because the leaders of small, poor nations are necessarily less "responsible" than the nuclear superpowers have been. (Piling up nuclear killing power equal to several tons of TNT for every man, woman, and child on earth and spreading nuclear technology around the world are not likely to be seen by future generations as models of responsible behavior.) The threat is so serious because many nations interested in acquiring weapons of mass destruction may feel more driven to use them than either of the Cold War antagonists has. Hence the nuclear-arms races of the future are likely to be more dangerous.

The best approach to reducing the nuclear threat is to put non-proliferation at the top of the global agenda. Doing so would require that the present nuclear powers accept dramatic cuts in existing stockpiles—cuts far below the levels in the START agreement—and begin the urgent process of delegitimatizing weapons of mass destruction. The fiftieth anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will occur in 1995—an appropriate target date for significant progress in changing the way nations think of, talk about, and deal with nuclear weapons.

Historically, military forces have been relied upon not only to protect lives and property but also to preserve and enhance national power and to defend a way of life. The Cold War was to a considerable extent about the latter. Up to now, a fundamental role of the armed forces has been to preserve a nation's choices—to let it decide its own political and economic development free of external coercive pressures. How successfully a nation could use its military forces in this way has depended mostly upon its size and overall power. One consequence of increasing economic interdependence is that today the choices of even large nations are circumscribed by the consequences of extended mobilization for war. To prepare for wars—and, certainly, to fight them—nations go into debt. More than a third of the federal budget for the fiscal year 1990 went to pay the costs of past, present, and future wars. The accumulation of the United States' debt over the last forty years is unprecedented, and the result of it is that the annual cost of debt service almost equals the pre-Gulf War 1991 defense budget of $290 billion.

At a moment when access to spare capital will determine a nation's influence far more decisively than its nuclear stockpile will, the United States is more dependent on foreign capital than it has been at any other time in the twentieth century. This unenviable position is part of the cost of playing the hegemonic role in the Cold War years. Far from protecting the United States from potentially hostile acts of other nations, the mounting costs have contributed greatly to the growing need for foreign short-term capital to finance the deficit. The consequence is an increase in the leverage that other nations can exert on this nation's domestic-policy choices. The dependence of the United States on the Japanese government and Japanese investors to buy Treasury bills every month to keep the federal government functioning changes the power relationship between this nation and Japan at a time when the two countries are divided by serious economic differences. When the Japanese economy declined last fall and Tokyo banks and investors did not buy their customary quota of T. bills, the United States was rescued by Saudi Arabia, its principal protectorate at the moment. Such reliance on foreign financial support is not a secure position for a great nation. President Bush has suggested that American leadership in fighting the Gulf War will result in "vastly restored credibility" for the United States that will translate into more "harmonious" economic relations with our major industrial competitors. But the weakening of the United States economy through further debt and through the postponement of essential non-military investment is likely to have the opposite effect.

The most problematic roles for military forces are the ones that are usually described metaphorically. The two principal metaphors are "insurance" and "police." The insurance analogy is based on the idea that since the world is filled with all sorts of threats it is only prudent to be prepared for all of them. In the respective white papers and strategic reviews that the chiefs of the armed services published in 1990 each offered laundry lists of threats—some plausible, some not—the sum of which would warrant maintaining substantially larger forces than those of the Cold War years. There are two problems with the insurance analogy. The first is that there is seldom, if ever, a recognition of past failures of military operations either to deter or to remove, or even to reduce, the threats listed, one example being the drug threat. The second is a similar failure to recognize that the payment of excessive premiums to insure against a variety of risks can be just as ruinous for nations as for businesses and households. As the United States struggles to deal with an accumulation of debt and skyrocketing budget deficits in the aftermath of the savings-and-loan bailout, the larger banking crisis, and the Gulf War costs, it is becoming increasingly evident that a big, versatile military capable of the array of missions specified in Pentagon contingency plans can be maintained only through neglect of the many urgently needed repairs to American society. "Peace dividend" is a misleading term, because dividends are discretionary payments, and corporations normally distribute them out of profits. The United States, by contrast, is operating at a huge loss, and the investments in cities, industry, education, housing, and health are not discretionary; they are mandatory investments to prevent further deterioration in the lives and the prospects of the American people, to renew a weakening economy, and to reinvigorate the institutions of American life on which security and well-being depend.

The police analogy is even more seductive. The job of police is to keep order, and who can be against that? But the analogy is flawed, because it has been stretched; the full-scale war in Korea, which caused more than a million casualties, including the death of more than forty thousand American participants, was called a police action. In December of 1989, the United States Air Force, according to its white paper, "assisted in preventing the overthrow of the Aquino government . . . by providing a deterring presence, thereby maintaining strategic U.S. interests without firing a shot." This intervention comes closer to the role played by the police in civil society, and so does the United States Navy's patrol of the Persian Gulf to convoy oil tankers toward the end of the Iraq-Iran War, in July of 1987. The show of force in these two cases was successful, at least in the short term, and it was undertaken in behalf of internationally recognized principles—in the former case, the defense of an elected government against a coup, and, in the latter, the freedom of the high seas.

The line between a police action and a military operation is real. Police derive their power from their acceptance as "officers of the law"; legitimate authority, not firepower, is the essential element, and when there is a broadly based challenge to that authority, keeping order is no longer a task for the police. If the police are unable to maintain order by virtue of their authority—backed by the shadow of force that is symbolized by their badge, uniform, and light arms—they cannot protect society. The spread of high-powered weapons in American cities is forcing police into almost nightly combat, and as police are compelled to resort more and more to violence they become less and less effective. A stable order is one that is widely viewed as a just order; an order imposed at gunpoint is never that, and partly for that reason the Pentagon's claims about how "mobile," "lean," and "lethal" forces can play the critical role in establishing a peaceful order should be taken for what they are—very expensive puffing.

Since the days of Richard Nixon, Presidents and Secretaries of State have declared from time to time that the United States is not "the policeman of the world," meaning that this nation does not undertake responsibility for keeping order everywhere. But in the Gulf crisis President Bush has asserted a role for the United States which is a dubious model for future international collective-security operations. The American decision to send troops to Saudi Arabia and the Saudi agreement to welcome them were made before the United Nations—or Congress, for that matter—was consulted. (Because the Soviet Union no longer plays the international role it played even a year ago, the United States feels freer to make unilateral decisions on the use of force outside the Western Hemisphere.) The President, stating that the operation was in support of an unspecified (and previously unmentioned and subsequently undiscussed) new world order, made it plain at the outset that what happened in the Gulf was to be primarily an American show. It is not a United Nations police effort as such efforts were envisioned by the military provisions of the United Nations Charter.

Before the United States and other world military powers can assume that they have a warrant to act as police, the principles of international law involved need to be interpreted much more clearly and to be applied with much greater consistency. The contradictory and self-serving use of international law by the United States in recent years, in attacking Grenada and Panama and in mining Nicaraguan waters, while re-

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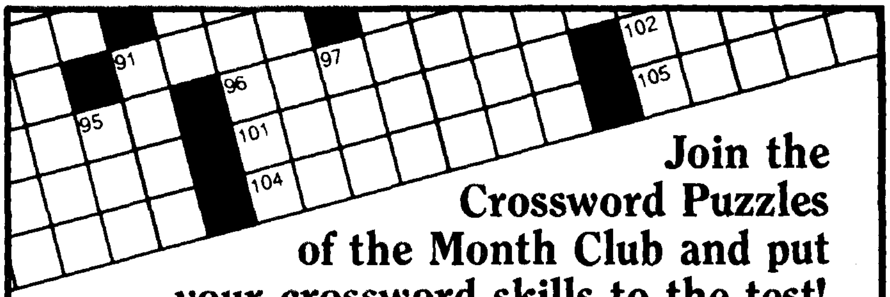

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jecting the jurisdiction of the World Court when it sided with Nicaragua, has served to reinforce the suspicions of former colonial countries that the use of force in the name of "collective security" or "stability" is nothing more than old-fashioned gunboat diplomacy in modern dress.

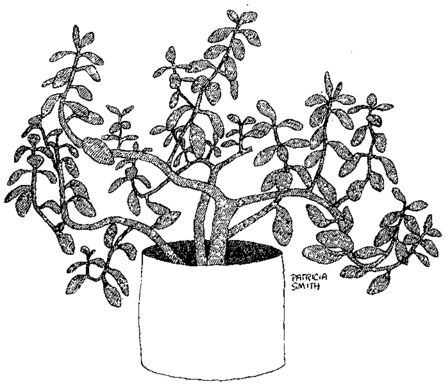
There is indeed an important policing role for military forces in the post-Cold War world. National forces operating under United Nations command, to the extent that they are supported by a broad international consensus and by the people of the nations supplying the troops, can help to defend and guarantee a legitimate order; that is, they can help maintain the order after it is established. But they cannot create a legitimate order, for that is the task of politics and diplomacy.

Operation Desert Storm cannot be counted on as a model for future police actions. Despite the fact that the target of this operation was a virtual caricature of an enemy, and that the lifeblood of industrial civilization was at the heart of the conflict, Operation Desert Storm aroused too much domestic controversy and opposition, even before the war began, to serve as a paradigm. There are few other treeless places in the world where the terrain permits the punishing aerial attacks on the enemy that kept American casualties low. If such a huge and costly operation is necessary to deter or resolve one war, how can the United States marshal the resources to deal with the myriad threats the Pentagon planners see on the horizon?

A CONSIDERABLE proportion of the extraordinary accumulation of military hardware throughout the world has been amassed for largely economic reasons; military expenditures in and of themselves, regardless of the weapons they buy, have come to play an important role in domestic and world politics. The mobilization for the Second World War rescued the United States from the Great Depression, and in the Cold War years military Keynesianism has been effectively used to lift the economy out of periodic recessions. The Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Reagan buildup came on the heels of the most serious economic downturns of the postwar era, and all helped with recovery, albeit at the expense of inflation. (This was particularly true of the Vietnam War.) The chief importance of the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union was as a spending race, which periodically stimulated the economy of the United States while straining the Soviet economy to the breaking point.

The over-all impact of four decades of permanent mobilization on the American economy is the subject of much controversy, but there is no disputing the fact that this mobilization has transformed the nature of American capitalism—and certainly not in the direction of the free-market economy advocated by most anti-Communist ideologues. Despite the periodic stimulus provided by cycles of military spending, military Keynesianism has had some profoundly negative effects. A large proportion of the nation's scientific and technological talent has been diverted from the civilian economy to the design and production of weapons. A significant segment of high-technology industry has become dependent on military contracts, and the result has been ever-increasing economic inefficiency. (In its first term, the Reagan Administration spent seventy-five per cent more than its predecessor on aircraft, while the number of planes increased only nine per cent.) Although the huge investment in the military in the Second World War produced technological advances that supported whole industries for thirty years or more, the spillover benefits to the commercial economy have since steadily declined, as military technology has become more specialized and arcane. The B-52 spawned the Boeing 707, the continental-range civilian jet airliner. But where is the commercial market for a Stealth bomber?

All through the Cold War years, the United States has been willing to sacrifice its economic interests to a narrow, overmilitarized conception of national security. Thus, the government imposed export controls on a wide array of technology in order to keep it out of the Cold War enemy's hands. But in so doing, as Robert Kuttner points out in "The End of Laissez-Faire," the United States has undermined the competitiveness of American companies, tying them up in administrative red tape that other nations do not require. In those same years, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, and other industrial countries under American protection not only have spent far less per capita on defense but also have embraced a post-militarist, post-imperialist culture that has enabled them to generate so much industrial power that they can compete successfully with American corporations around the world, and even in the American market itself. Between 1980 and 1988, the already small American share of world exports in automobiles fell ten per cent, while the United States share of machine tools fell thirty-five per cent, and semiconductors thirty-nine per cent.

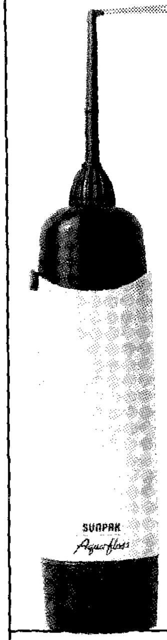


In the Cold War years, the United States fought most of its military engagements to defend a "friendly" government from an insurgent force inside the country. Most of the insurgents were assumed to be instruments of Moscow—or, at least, future "assets" of the rival superpower. In the Western Hemisphere, pursuing a policy that was ostentatiously independent of the United States was enough to turn a local government into a military threat, whatever its ideological coloring. Hence both the non-Communist Noriega regime in Panama and the Marxists in Grenada became targets of military operations. But defining national power in terms of "influence" over small countries, most of them very poor, has proved curiously self-defeating. While the United States was intervening in a number of countries around the world, not only with military operations but also with paramilitary operations conducted by the Central Intelligence Agency and with elaborate arms-transfer arrangements—all in the effort to convince the world, and itself as well, that it was still No. 1—the wages of American workers slipped below those of workers in other industrial countries, the nation's infant-mortality rates remained well above the norm in other advanced countries, the educational system at the primary and secondary levels was exposed as shockingly inferior to that of many other countries, the proportion of the population behind bars was unequalled, and the murder rate was embarrassingly higher than that of any other country for which statistics are available.

It should not be forgotten that the Soviet Union abandoned the Warsaw Pact, accepted the reunification of Germany and its inclusion in NATO, and in most other respects ceased to be a global superpower at a time when its military forces had never been more formidable. In large measure because of its huge military expenditures—some Soviet observers put them at twenty per cent or more of the gross national product—the Soviet regime failed to meet the basic expectations of the people and lost its legitimacy. Despite the obvious advantages and resources of the United States, its influence and power also depend on whether the nation can fulfill the legitimate expectations of its people. The sacrifice of economic rights, social services, and amenities that other advanced industrial countries take for granted—health insurance, good schools, safe city streets—to big military budgets year after year has surely contributed to the appearance of American decline.

"Perception" was a favorite Cold War word, and in its name billions of dollars were expended to impress five or six men in the Kremlin. The unravelling of the Soviet Union at the height of its military power suggests that the influence a great nation can exercise in the world depends largely on how its domestic society is perceived, both from within and from without. For a nation to be a great power, it is not enough for it to be rich or militarily strong. Its social and political institutions must represent something to admire, and even to emulate. Example had been a major source of American influence for two centuries, but in the Cold War years this critical aspect of national power eroded. American popular culture, American prosperity, and the American values of free expression and individual opportunity are admired, even envied, all over the world, but the reality of American cities, schools, political process, and family life inspires little admiration or envy. The spectacular military success in the desert will not restore the weakening sinews of nationhood.

—RICHARD J. BARNET



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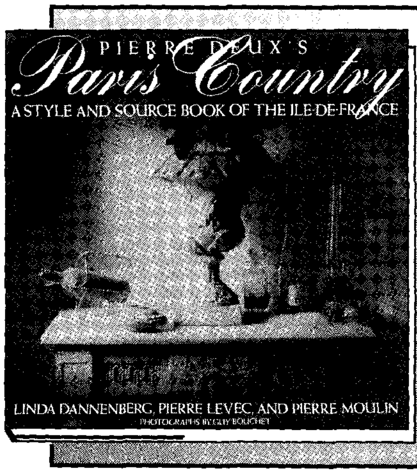
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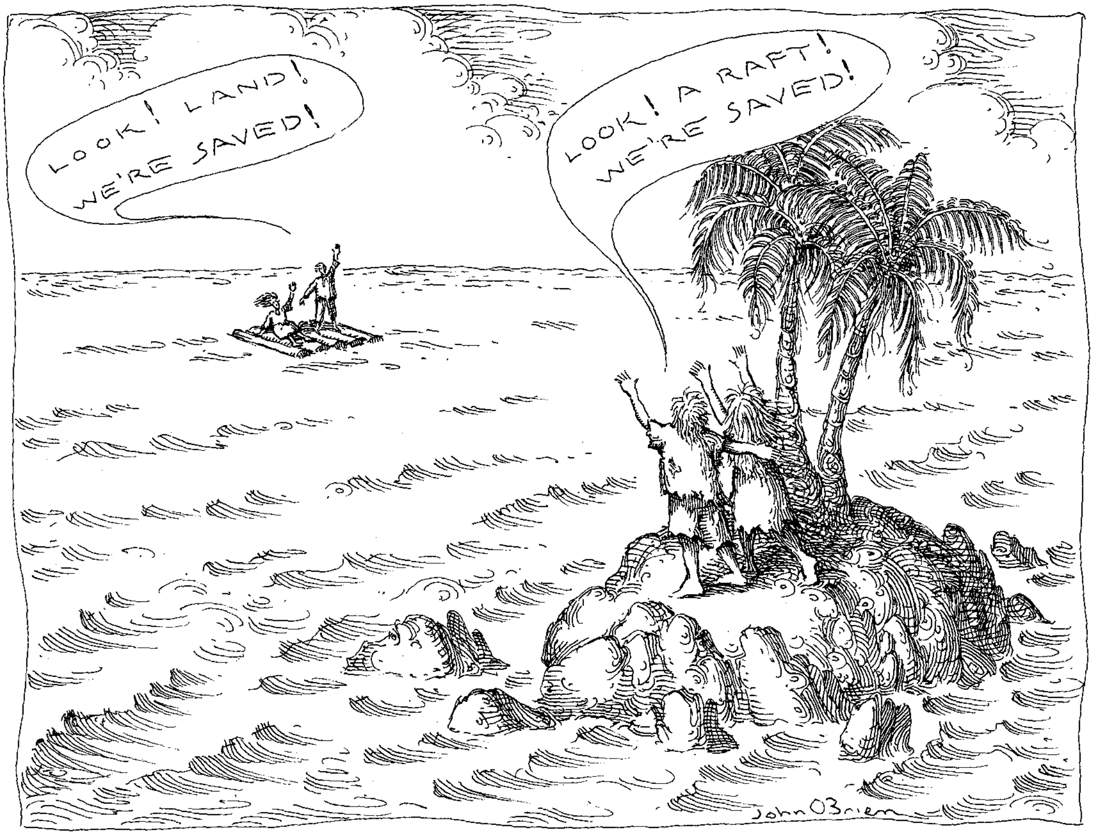
FOR over a decade, the city's real-estate developers—egged on by state and city planners—have sought to transform Times Square from our old familiar place of entertainment into a business district disguised as a Disneyland. Most of the new skyscrapers there, as I noted recently, have a disconcertingly clownish look. Unwelcome as the perception of elements of farce in these buildings is, something still more unwelcome is the discovery that clownishness has become characteristic of the design of many private and public buildings from coast to coast—buildings in places that, unlike Times Square, have no connection, factitious or otherwise, with entertainment. The culture of the country as a whole has become, or is rapidly becoming, Disneyized, and the practice of architecture was bound to reflect it.

Looking back, one can trace the source of the present epidemic of architectural Disneyitis to what once seemed a sign of architectural health: an eagerness on the part of a number of young architects to free themselves from the bleak rigors of the International Style and retrieve from the vast kitchen midden of the past certain long-discarded architectural elements, both classical and romantic. The movement called postmodernism appeared at the start to be a more or less innocent (if also more or less ignorant) nostalgia for the principles of Beaux-Arts architecture. Only later did it turn out that this nostalgia wasn't so innocent after all; the retrieved principles were employed to serve so little structural purpose that they became mere decorative souvenirs—a column here, a pediment there—arbitrarily isolated to catch our attention.

Isolation and the distortion that is often one of its consequences are among the means by which Disney successfully established his multiple empires. Early in his career, he discovered that he could delight the public by emphasizing the goodness of mankind and omitting whatever might be thought evil (or perhaps only distasteful). It was a make-believe version of life, adroitly cut off from actuality; one sensed Disney's entrepreneurial shrewdness in defining "mankind" as the members of the prosperous white American middle class. The early Mickey Mouse was obviously an aspiring member of this class, whereas his cartoon predecessor Krazy Kat had been an anarchist out of the lower depths. Royalty also plays a substantial role in the Disney fantasy world; Sleeping Beauty, Prince Charming, and other fairy-tale royalty aside, one thinks of poor mad Ludwig II of Bavaria, who built the pseudo-Wagnerian castle Neuschwanstein, in the mountains not far from Munich. Ludwig's folly served as a model for the castle in the ur-Disneyland, at Anaheim, California. In the Disney view, mankind may be childish but it is neither ill-scrubbed nor untidy. The horses that pull streetcars along an imitation nineteenth-century brick thoroughfare in Disneyland are expected not to defecate while on duty, and if they do so their droppings are whisked away with instantaneous twentieth-century finesse. Although the structures that make up a Disney amusement park are subject to the usual laws of nature, the fictions that they embody are derived from Disney's animated cartoons, in which all such laws are by convention suspended.

In a fashion equally Disney-like, a number of contemporary architects follow, albeit with reluctance, the laws of nature in construction, but when it comes to how their clients will conduct themselves inside these structures they count on the laws of nature giving way to some form of fantasy. For in the work of these architects a gap exists between the assumptions implicit in their designs and the realities of the social order to which their clients are committed. The big brown-shingled seaside villas that Robert A. M. Stern and Robert Venturi have been designing for rich clients in East Hampton and along the New Jersey shore evoke


LOOK! LAND! WE'RE SAVED!
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John O'Brien

breeze-filled verandas and pitchers of iced tea on wicker tables but omit the disagreeable basis upon which the smooth running of the originals of those villas depended—the fact, among many other such facts, that under the generous high-gabled roofs an army of immigrant servants sweltered in hundred-degree temperatures, awaiting, not without gratitude, their every second Thursday evening off. Our architects take care to see in the handiwork of their predecessors only what it interests them to see, but how well suited are these near-replicas to the sort of lives that even the rich live nowadays? It is easier to design a fantasy house than to live a fantasy life; the architect escapes the burden of accommodation that he places upon his unwary client.

We Disneyize America at our peril, because an innocent, decorous, iced-tea wholesomeness isn't prominent among our national characteristics, and never has been. The pretense to wholesomeness practiced by our Victorian ancestors caused them to be denounced by later generations for their hypocrisy. The Disney wholesomeness invites a new hypocrisy to ride piggyback upon the old. More and more frequently, public buildings as well as private ones bear the stamp of toyland. One such public building—a pale masonry cube that houses a variety of city bureaus in Portland, Oregon—was designed by Michael Graves in his little-boy, hand-drawn classical vein and was to have had appliquéd to each of its sides a flutter of baroque ribbons, while on its roof was to have appeared a cuddly miniature Pompeian village. For reasons of economy, the village was scrapped; the only vestige of the ornamental is a colossal female figure crouching above the main entrance and called Portlandia. Although the building is less than ten years old, plans are being drawn up for its remodelling. Meanwhile, not surprisingly, Graves has become a favorite architect of the Disney Company. He recently designed Disney's headquarters, in Burbank, and hotels and other structures in the cloud-cuckoo-land of Disney World, in Florida. Disney requires "entertainment architecture," and Graves has been quick to provide it: caryatids representing the Seven Dwarfs support the cornice of the office building in Burbank, and near the top of the blushing façades of the Florida

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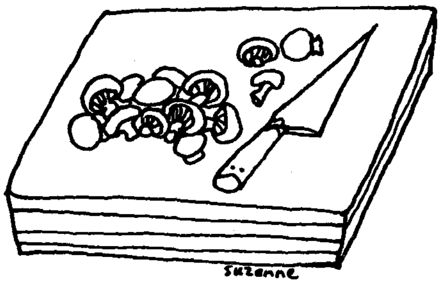
hotels are four-story-high swans and nearly six-story-high dolphins, of steel, wood, and liquid fibreglass, insouciantly breasting the tropical air. For the Euro Disneyland that is currently under construction outside Paris, Graves has designed a series of structures that are intended to constitute a fantasy view of the New York City skyline.

Helmut Jahn's State of Illinois Center, in Chicago, is another haut-Disney production. Concentric rings of glass and aluminum enclose an atrium some seventeen stories high; having attained the sun-bedazzled uppermost level, one feels oneself to be somewhere in outer space, travelling at a rate of speed so great as to resemble standing still. When the building first opened, the air-conditioning system was unequal to dealing with the summertime heat; it is even said that some secretaries set about their daily tasks in bathing suits, with parasols shading their typewriters and computers—bureaucracy transmogrified into vaudeville. The building plainly seeks to amuse and lull; the intention is for the taxpayers of Illinois to feel a sense of happy-go-lucky disorientation whenever they enter the building to carry on some necessary business. To call the building a "center," as in Rockefeller Center or Lincoln Center, is also to hint at pleasure; in former times, it would have been called, simply and grimly, a state office building. We have come a long way from the days when the design of a public building was meant to induce among its visitors an expectation (often betrayed, to be sure) that the powers of government would be justly exercised within its walls; the State of Illinois Center induces instead an incredulous guffaw.

GLANCING over the roster of our fashionable architects—besides Stern, Venturi, Graves, and Jahn, the names Charles Moore, Stanley Tigerman, and Frank Gehry spring to mind—one notes again and again in their handiwork a large component of what may be termed, if one admires it, boyish prankishness. If one doesn't admire it, it seems to suggest a lack of seriousness disturbing in men who are, after all, well into their middle years and at the peak of their professional careers. Moore, who has just received the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Architects, is a professor at the School of Architecture at the University of Texas in Austin. He owns houses in several widely scattered localities, but his natural home at the moment is in the air, as he flies from the site of one commission to the site of the next. Unlike most previous winners of the A.I.A. Gold Medal—Frank Lloyd Wright, William Adams Delano, Mies van der Rohe—Moore has no unmistakable personal style. One detects in his work as he grows older only an increased measure of eccentricity. It is an eccentricity that is almost totally divorced from function—as was not the case with Wright, say, whose eccentricities either had an authentic function or had bestowed upon them, by the eloquent Master himself, a plausible pseudo function. Among Moore's recent domestic commissions have been a so-called Viking house in the rolling farmland of eastern Wisconsin and a Roman villa on the sands of Malibu, some miles north of Los Angeles. The wealthy family that commissioned the Viking house, being of part-Scandinavian descent, likes to think of itself as possessing Viking blood; this harmless fictive pedigree becomes the occasion for much exposed wood, copper, iron, and stone, and also for an immense chimney tower of glacial boulders rising through the heart of the house and striking a note of barbaric puissance. (The tower is the handiwork of a young Chicago sculptor named Dan Yarbrough.)

The Viking house is surrounded by acres of woods and open fields; the Roman villa in Malibu has had to be shoehorned into one of those narrow parcels of land (forty feet wide and something over three hundred feet long, depending on the federally designated high-water mark) into which so many miles of Pacific beaches have been sliced up before being sold off. As in most California beach houses, a garage and an entryway face on the street, and the main living quarters face seaward. An atrium open to the sky occupies the central portion of the house and contains a long ornamental pool. It is far deeper than the classic atrium pools upon which it is modelled, and is able to serve on occasion as that obligatory Malibu embellishment a lap pool. An eccentric touch characteristic of Moore is the placement of an aedicula (Latin for "little building") within a much larger space: the living room of the Malibu villa boasts an aedicula. (Moore was hoping to install a second aedicula, in the master bedroom, but his clients, a Hollywood producer and his wife, rejected the proposed design, possibly on the ground that, having seen one aedicula, one has seen them all.)



Stanley Tigerman, the director of the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois in Chicago, is another *magister ludi* of high rank, who has been cracking metaphorical jokes in three dimensions for a long time now. His clients obviously possess a broad and sometimes earthy sense of humor. They have allowed him to design a multiple-story public garage with a façade that mimics a classic touring-car radiator grille; a house that resembles a box of animal crackers; and a house in the shape of a penis. As a specimen of "entertainment architecture," the latter house has earned considerable praise; whether it is, as Tigerman maintains, highly erotic is open to question. Buildings by their nature are so ineradicably sexual (consider church spires, chimneys, and skyscrapers, on the one hand, and domes, naves, and crypts, on the other) that very little of the truly stimulating survives the overwhelming prevalence of suggestion they provide. (Otherwise, Eskimos, possessing in the igloo the most voluptuous of all vernacular forms of architecture, would be famous—as they are not—for sexual customs unrivalled in their variety.) Tigerman recently designed a quaint, non-biomorphic, pseudo-Queen Anne house outside Chicago. Between the street and the house, two garages are placed at a forty-five-degree angle from the street, at right angles to each other, perhaps in order to amuse us by their unexpectedness. Why do they not face the street head on, as other garages in the neighborhood do? For that matter, why would it not be better to have one big garage than two little ones? We are amused, but we cannot help suspecting that when both garages are in use the design invites collisions.

Long before Graves became preoccupied with swans and dolphins, Frank Gehry doted upon representations of fish. They ranged in size from a five-story-high fish-shaped restaurant in Tokyo to a one-story-high Jonah-size fish that was part of a travelling exhibition of Gehry's works (seen here in 1988, at the Whitney). Gehry's own house, in Santa Monica, has gained fame as one of the most bizarre pranks in architectural history—a deliberately ramshackle mess of unfinished wood and chain-link fencing. Gehry himself has proclaimed that one of the functions of the house is to be an eyesore and a rebuke to the humdrum architecture of the neighborhood. Like his friend Tigerman, Gehry may be said to possess an exceptionally robust sense of humor.

The Pritzker Prize was awarded to Gehry in 1989, and it has perhaps had the effect characteristic of many such honors: that of inducing in the laureate the chill of immortality. Whether by coincidence or no, it is certainly the case that one of Gehry's latest projects—a new headquarters for the American Center in Paris, on the Rue de Bercy, adjacent to the Seine—is a building that approaches the soberly conventional in its proportions, being respectful of the age-old cubical massing of Parisian structures. At the same time, it boasts a number of breathtaking Gehry touches: an awning that swoops down over the lobby entrance like a bird of prey; walls that, as they rise, pitch outward in apparent defiance of gravity, to say nothing of common sense; and a central tower that, unlike its famous predecessor at Pisa, leans first in one direction and then in another. (Gehry depends on—and plays with—technical resources that no earlier generation of architects had at its disposal. Again and again, his buildings appear to be asking the question "Why do we not fall down?") Groundbreaking for the American Center building is expected to take place this autumn.

DURING the past decade, it has often happened that the designs of our leading architects have reached the threshold of farce without quite crossing it. I take this hesitation to signify that behind the seeming lack of seriousness may lie a growing and perhaps largely unexamined lack of conviction. At those stressful moments when we feel uncertain of how to act, the temptation to make a joke is almost irresistible. The underlying problem is that jokes in architecture are rarely successful. As is true of Claes Oldenburg's jests in sculpture—his colossal baseball bats, clothespins, and soft erasers—the permanence of the material of which they are constructed and their prolonged occupancy of an assigned place in public squares, parks, or museums argue against their being able to give their viewers continually renewed delight. (Oldenburg sculptures put me in mind of Henny Youngman one-liners. We laugh willingly enough at first hearing, but we cannot go on laughing, again and again, on a hundred succeeding occasions.)

If I am right in supposing that for many architects it is a lack of conviction that has prompted them to reject the seriousness appropriate to the high place they have achieved in the profession, then what I have deemed prankishness may be more accurately—and more sympathetically—described as nervousness. For these architects confront at the moment a crisis far graver than anyone would have thought possible two or three years ago. Should the depression into which the country has fallen prove long-lasting, it will bring the practice of architecture, always at the mercy of boom-or-bust, close to a standstill. At a time when the profession as a whole appears uncertain of the direction in which it ought to be heading, circumstances beyond its control may keep it from heading anywhere at all.

—BRENDAN GILL

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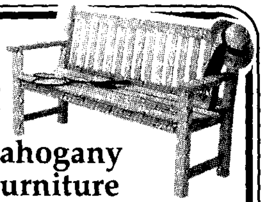

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BOOKS

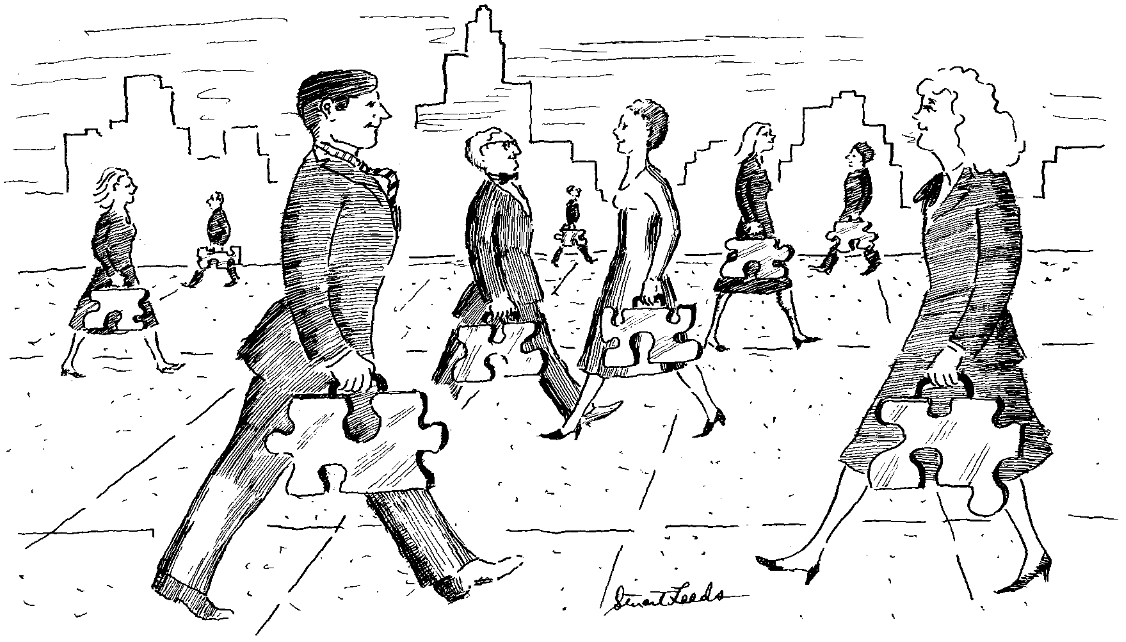
Glasnost, Honne, and Conquistadores

FICTION brings us news of other countries and cultures, but with a certain lag in the transmission. "No Return," by Alexander Kabakov (translated from the Russian by Thomas Whitney; Morrow; $15.95), made big waves when it was published in Moscow, in June of 1989, and they lifted its middle-aged author into celebrity, right up to an interview in the *Times* and a back-page editorial in *Time*. But two years later, in the cold light of English translation, in a slim volume of less than a hundred pages, this sketchy futuristic novel reads like a movie scenario (the movie is being made) and occasions only modest shivers. Written in May of 1988, it takes place in a year, 1993, rapidly drawing nigh, as are many of the developments its dystopian vision projects: the Russian republics *are* in a state of rebellion and ethnic contention, and the Russian economy *is* a shambles. True, the impotent ruble has not yet been renamed the "gorbaty," a general does not yet head the embattled central government, and the streets of Moscow are not yet rife with explosions and machine-gun fire. But Kabakov's elaborations of present Soviet distress fail, for this Western reader, to illuminate or diagnose our formerly monolithic Cold War foe's sudden collapse into economic ignominy and smiling international compliance.

The Russian title of "No Return," "Nevozvrashchenets," means "the one who does not return," a term conventionally applied to defectors. The hero, Yuri Ilich, works as an "extrapolator" in a learned institute that is unnamed but is persuasively described: "The dirty government-issue turquoise walls, the eternally flickering, half-functioning fluorescent lights, and the archaic carpet runners covered with canvas protectors replete with dirty footprints endowed our institute with the air of a backwater office in the boondocks." In these dismal quarters Yuri is approached by two smooth-talking operatives for a vague agency that we take to be the K.G.B. They want him, presumably drawing upon his talents as an extrapolator (the mechanics of his trade are left murky), to write reports from the future for them, and they seal the bargain by applying a "gentle kick" and a painful twist of his arm. With no more transition than a space break, the narrator finds himself in the Moscow of 1993. It is cold and snowing; gunfire is heard. Yuri's transistor radio, its batteries nearly dead, tells him of the ongoing congress of "the Russian Union of Democratic Parties," containing Christian Democratic delegations from the Transcaucasus, Social Fundamentalists from Turkestan, and Catholic Radicals from the Baltic Federation. General Victor Andreyevich Panayev, "secretary-president of the Preparatory Committee," has just addressed this motley body. In the Persian Gulf, a convoy of unarmed vessels belonging to the United States but flying the neutral Polish flag has been attacked by "unidentified aircraft . . . with one more nuclear bombing." In the Moscow streets, people are wearing tattered clothes and carrying guns. Street traffic consists of a light tank and "a barely functioning Volga sedan with rusted-out fenders full of holes." In the doorway of his old childhood home, Yuri encounters a "female predator"—a young woman "with a heavy Ukrainian accent," come to Moscow in the hope of buying some boots. Together, they elude a gang of assassins—veterans of the Afghanistan war—and the numerous police of the Commission for National Security. After some amorous compliance on a frosty park bench, the Ukrainian charmer seizes Yuri's Kalashnikov rifle; at gunpoint, she berates him for being a liberal intellectual and demands his purchasing coupons:

> It was because of vermin like you that this whole thing began. People lived like human beings and everything was normal and my man could knock off six grand gorbaties in one good day, but that wasn't enough for you! For you everything was bad. You envious rats! Leonid Ilich Brezhnev wasn't good enough for you, but there were clean streets under him, and practical people who knew how to live, had a real life! You couldn't stand Stalin. You couldn't stand Brezhnev. Gorbachev was your cup of tea! Just give me your coupons and get out of here—or else I'll kill you, you Moscow egghead.

As of 1991, Moscow eggheads see around them, amid the new freedoms they yearned for, many less fortunate apparent results of *perestroika*, from separatism among the Soviet republics to drastic shortages of not just fancy consumer goods but essential supplies. It is hard to know what horrors of social meltdown in "No Return" significantly exaggerate the actual situation. Menacing gangs of "twelve-year-old benzene addicts" roam the streets, along with gangs of black-jacketed, Jew-baiting "Vikings." On these same hazardous streets, soldiers of



"the Revolutionary Committee of Northern Persia" take and murder hostages in reprisal for similar acts perpetrated by "the filthy dogs of the Holy Self-Defense Force." Starving tramps and benzene addicts dominate the underground metro stations, and of two trains that come through one is running empty and the other has been commandeered by a lewd party on wheels. Meanwhile, people with advantaged positions, such as co-op managers, exploit the new opportunities and live luxuriously. A mysterious elegant stranger taunts Yuri Ilich: "Here is one more brilliant holiday of liberation for you: pogroms, extermination detachments, famine, and general horror. Then, naturally, ruin and reconstruction with an iron hand." A militant workers' party already has donned what seem to be Mao jackets, and "storm troopers from the Stalinist Union of Russian Youth" try to blow up Pushkin's statue, because he was anti-government and non-Slavic. But Yuri at the end votes for post-*glasnost* disorder: his K.G.B. tormentors, transported to this extrapolated 1993, no longer frighten him. He tells his wife, "*Here* for some reason I am not afraid of them. Here everything is going to be okay. The main thing is that we are no longer *there*."

"No Return," unlike "1984" and Evgenii Zamiatin's great dystopia "We," inspires no real fear of the future. Unlike Huxley's "Brave New World" and H. G. Wells's "The Time Machine," it does not inspire even disgust with the present. Shortages, ethnic riots, and all, Alexander Kabakov is exhilarated to be in print after seventeen years of anonymous editorial labor with a trade newspaper for railroad workers, and his exhilaration shows through. When the party on the subway car slides by, we want to join it. The peculiar zaniness, born of Gogol and Bely, that has enabled certain recent Soviet writers—Vassily Aksyonov and Andrei Bitov, Yuz Aleshkovsky and Benedict Erofeev—to vent their vitality and imply their rage does not quite stretch to fit the new Soviet situation, wherein disorder, and not the established order, is the enemy. The book's keenest shivers come with the familiar menaces of the Communist regime: the military enforcers who arrive in tanks, and the K.G.B. enforcers who silkily reassure the hero, "So just don't be frightened, Yuri Ilich, don't be frightened, don't be frightened." Zamiatin, writing in the early nineteen-twenties out of the relatively mild and rational oppressions of Lenin's regime, foresaw a glassy world from which all privacy, individual color, and human passion would be benignly squeezed; the terror of that suffocating vision flickers in "No Return," but as something outmoded, something in fragments.

IF Alexander Kabakov doesn't scare us as much as we expected, Junichirō Tanizaki scares us a bit more. At least, even his lighter-hearted fictions, three of which are collected in "A Cat, a Man, and Two Women" (translated from the Japanese by Paul McCarthy; Kodansha; $18.95), make us hold our breath, and the endings don't let us quite exhale. In the long title story, we are not surprised that the hero, the plump and ineffectual Shozo, loves his pet cat, Lily, more than he loves either his wife, Fukuko, or his ex-wife, Shinako, but we *are* surprised to have the love detailed with such unabashed physicality. Shozo feeds Lily by making her tug at a little marinated mackerel held in his mouth; his watching wife reflects, "It might be all very well to like cats, but it was going too far to transfer a fish from master's mouth to cat's." At the other extreme of intimacy, the odor of cat excrement mixes with his fondness, and he remembers with a curious relish the moment when, during a tussle, the "breath from her bowels" blew straight into his face. He brags to his wife, "Lily and I are so close we've smelled each other's farts!" When the cat gets into bed with him, "he would . . . stroke that area of the neck which cats most love to have fondled; and Lily would immediately respond with a satisfied purring. She might begin to bite at his finger, or gently claw him, or drool a bit—all were signs that she was excited."

In one of the two shorter stories bound in with this piece of feline erotica, "Professor Rado," we are not too startled when the taciturn professor, in a moment reminiscent of Proust or of Tanizaki's "The Key," is seen through a window being caned by a lightly clad maidservant, but this just foreshadows the real voyeuristic treat, in which the professor is spied kneeling at the feet of a beautiful tall leper he has long admired from afar. Ecstatically he fits her deformed foot with an

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artificial toe, and she, her voice distorted by her diseased nose, tells him it doesn't hurt a bit. Masochism, O.K., and necrophilia, we've heard of that, but leprophilia?—it isn't even in the dictionary!

The deft translator offers in his introduction a helpful cultural observation: "Japanese society is characterized by quite clear-cut divisions between the public persona and the private life; between *tatemae* (what is outwardly expressed) and *honne* (what is actually thought and felt)." Voyeurism, the glimpse through a chink in *tatemae* into the depths of *honne*, recurs in Tanizaki, and a sense of mutual spying through the enshrouding forms of decorum permeates his stately masterpiece, "The Makioka Sisters." His characters suggest potbellied stoves whose cast-iron exteriors conceal the fire that makes them hot. His stories have the propulsive fascination of hidden menace, and his characters keep deepening, pushing the story into new corners. Shinako, Shozo's rejected first wife, captures Lily in a spiteful maneuver but comes to love her much as her ex-husband did, and rapturously shares her bed with her. Lily, it should be said, is no simple indigenous cat, but "of a European breed," and "European cats are generally free from the stiff, square-shouldered look of Japanese cats; they have clean, chic-looking lines, like a beautiful woman with gently sloping shoulders." Thus Tanizaki, in 1935 on the verge of his six-year patriotic labor of translating "The Tale of Genji" into modern Japanese, gently burlesqued the infatuation with things Western that he had sympathetically dramatized in his novel of 1924, "Naomi."

The cat story ends puzzlingly: Shozo, discovering that his former wife has reconstituted his loving relationship with Lily, flees, "as if pursued by something dreadful," just when a Western reader expects a happy reconciliation on the basis of a shared passion. Nor does the ending of the second shorter story, "The Little Kingdom," take us where we thought we were going. The reader, foreseeing a power struggle between a fifth-grade teacher, Kaijima, and a mysteriously magnetic student, Numakura, who organizes all the other students into a little kingdom of unquestioning allegiance, petty theft, and commerce in an invented currency, instead sees the poor instructor almost resistlessly succumb to the student's spell, as illness and poverty drag him and his family down. The students' little kingdom proves to be the only realm wherein he can acquire milk for his baby, and the bitter irony of this comes upon us without warning. In Tanizaki, the bizarre reaches out to possess reality; perverse sexual obsession is just his most usual instrument for demonstrating how precariously society's façades and structures contain the underlying *honne*.

OUR basic North American education does little to disabuse children of the notion that Columbus made his momentous landfall in 1492 upon some part of the East Coast of the United States. That Columbus landed on a small island not yet unambiguously identified, and that his entire career of exploration throughout four transatlantic voyages confined him to the mazy manifold coasts of the Caribbean, and that he died without any real understanding of what he had discovered—these facts, as curious as the pessimistic fantasies of Latin-American magic realism, are downplayed in our celebrations. Between Columbus's first landing and Cortés's spectacular conquest of Mexico from 1519 to 1521, our common knowledge encounters a void; and, indeed, the immense succeeding pageant of Spanish America, between Pizarro's conquest of the Incas and Bolívar's liberation, two centuries later, of a great arc of territories from Venezuela to Bolivia, is a vague blur north of the Rio Grande.

"Sea of Lentils," by the expatriate Cuban Antonio Benítez-Rojo (translated from the Spanish by James Maraniss; University of Massachusetts; $22.95), plays upon Spanish-American history rousingly, with an incessant hail of luminous, violent imagery and an unmistakable indignation. Benítez-Rojo has a distinct viewpoint, analytical and appalled, left over, one imagines, from the days after 1959 when he worked for the newly installed Castro government. The introduction to "Sea of Lentils," written by Sidney Lea, whose *New England Review and Bread Loaf Quarterly* first printed this scintillating author in English translation, tells us that before Castro's revolution Benítez-Rojo studied economics in the United States, and that after it he worked in the Ministry of Labor. He did research for Casa de las Americas, a government cultural institution, in Caribbean history, and in 1979 became director of Cuba's Center for Caribbean Studies. The next year, attending a scholarly conference in Paris, he defected, and he now teaches at Amherst College. Mr. Lea, having provided this background, goes on to describe "Sea of Lentils" as liquid not only in subject but in method: "Its continuity (or continuities) consists, paradoxically, in the very polyrhythms of interruption, divagation, reconsideration, extenuation." He quotes Benítez-Rojo: "The culture of meta-archipelagoes is an eternal return, a detour without destination or milepost, a roundabout that leads nowhere but back home; it is a feed-back machine, as is the sea, the wind, the Milky Way, the novel." He further quotes the eloquent author as saying that "Sea of Lentils" is "a deconstructionist novel, no question," thus invoking a term that gives much obscure comfort to contemporary academics. Does "deconstruction" mean, here, that the novel dissolves as it goes along, or that by animating some ugly historical anecdotes it disassembles our myths of imperial expansion? The novel is not especially convoluted or shifty. It blends four separate narrative strands, but with clear enough demarcations; readers who have survived Faulkner and Joyce should have no trouble keeping their heads above water. What matters for purposes of readability is that Benítez-Rojo has packed his novel with arresting matter, and that he writes wonderfully, with life, edge, and the density of a poem.

The four strands concern (1) King Philip II of Spain, who lies dying in the Escorial, in 1598, and mournfully reflects back upon his long reign; (2) Antón Babtista, a fictional soldier arrived in Hispaniola with Columbus's second voyage, in 1493, and his rapacious career among the gullible and docile Indians; (3) Don Pedro, the young son-in-law of the Adelantado (literally, "one who goes in advance"; applied to the governor of a province) Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, as he experiences the founding of St. Augustine, in 1565, and the merciless massacre of the French Huguenot forces captured nearby; and (4) the de Pontes, a Genoan mercantile family transplanted to Tenerife, in the Canary Islands, and their profitable development of a three-cornered trade involving guns for slaves in Africa, and slaves for gold, silver, and pearls in the Caribbean. This last strand, the economic, draws upon the author's special erudition, and is a crucial one in a tapestry of colonial exploitation, but it remains the hardest to follow, even though the de Pontes' financial adventures colorfully include piracy and the calculated seduction of an English seafarer, John Hawkins, by the lovely Ines de Ponte. In all four sequences, women play an important role in male destinies: Ines enlists Hawkins in the de Ponte fleet; Philip II mourns his failure to woo Elizabeth of England, an amorous rejection that takes on cataclysmic form in the defeat of his armada thirty years later; and both Antón Babtista and Don Pedro owe their favored positions to their mates' relatives.

Babtista is a marvellous creation, a Sancho Panza as if by Rabelais. The little Taínos Indian girls of Hispaniola become mere receptacles for him, to be filled or emptied:

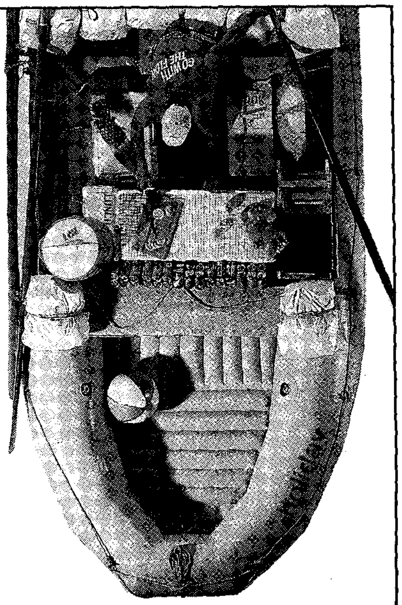
> You relaxed beside a girl whose crotch was tight and musky; then you grabbed another one, who was still nursing, and, nearly throttling her, began to suckle like a calf until you left her dry. That was real living, not like the days of want and prayer aboard the *Mariagalante;* you would sigh with pleasure, hidden in the canefields by the river, as you pecked between the legs of a young girl whose breasts were hard and salty as two olive pits.

This wallowing Everyman of the Conquest, with his "heavy gut, and empty testicles," inspires Benítez-Rojo's prose to the warm enthusiasm of direct address. Mistaken for a god, Babtista lives as a privileged guest among the Indians:

> You fattened like a pig on fodder, Antón; you grew rolls of flesh and sprouted patriarchal flanks that you would sway in the happy sty of your hammock, Antón, you suckling pig, you potbelly, you oozed lard up to your nose.

In a moment of impulsive altruism Antón baptizes a Taínos infant. Through this child he forms a bond with the niece of a chief; he calls his mistress Doña Antonia, and embeds himself in her family "like a gluttonous, burgeoning chigger." His happy parasitic state is disturbed, however, by the new regulations of the stabilizing colony of Hispaniola: when cohabitation is prohibited, he marries his Indian benefactress, and when a decree declares that "anyone guilty of undermining Castilian dignity through the contraction of marriage with an Indian or a pagan" must lose his lands and holdings, he acts more decisively still. "As soon as Antón Babtista heard the announcement, he hurried home, found Doña Antonia, and strangled her forthwith by the cotton strip that she wore as a tiara."

The casual cruelty of these invading Spaniards, possessed by their visions of God and gold, burns through the hallucinatory history of "Sea of Lentils." The piety of Philip II, aspiring to hopes of sainthood, is dismally mixed with the stench and effluvia of his last agony; the burden of his joyless monarchy, devoted to the cause of the Counter-Reformation, presses him into the grave. With grim satisfaction, he contemplates the extent of his Catholic empire, where "if by chance the enemy should set his foot upon some desolate landing, he would not survive there long, he would end up like those Huguenots who dared to settle in Florida"; this alludes to an event we have witnessed, in another of the novel's narratives. With all the courtesies of medieval knighthood, Menéndez de Avilés (perceived by his son-in-law as infirm and old, though in 1565 he was forty-six) declines the French soldiers' offers of tribute and requests for mercy. They point out that France and Spain are not at war, and he responds, "There is no war, it's true, but Florida is a house forbidden to all who are not Spaniards. You are heretics as well, and thus the enemies of Spain. And I have to fight you as such, for my king has entrusted me to do it. . . . You are Lutherans and I shall have to kill you." The Protestant force, falsely believing itself outnumbered, surrenders, and is treacherously massacred in the sand dunes. At the end of the slaughter, which has taken Don Pedro by surprise, his father-in-law asks him mockingly, "How many Lutheran pigs have you killed, *maestre?*" When the next band of Huguenots shows up, Don



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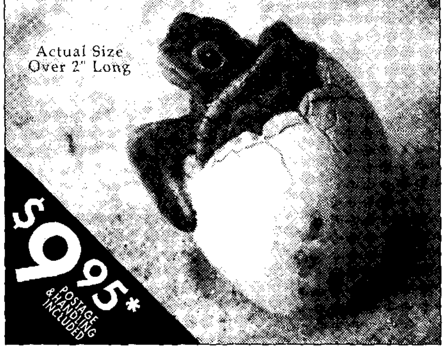

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Pedro is invited to slay their leader, Juan Ribao, as he kneels on the sand and sings a hymn. Tremblingly, the young man manages, though after the first sword thrust his victim keeps singing, "quietly, choking in the blood that ran out of his mouth and nose." The Adelantado embraces him, saying, "Now I can die in peace, for in you these lands shall have a good protector." The Counter-Reformation has won another good soldier; the punctilious fanaticism, forged in the Moorish wars, whereby the Spanish empire was to rise and fall has been chillingly illustrated.

Benítez-Rojo's picture leaves out much that an impartial historian might have included: the humane priests who followed the armies and recorded and eventually mitigated the anti-Indian atrocities; the savagery that already existed between the indigenous nations; and the quixotic courage and dash with which in a few decades the conquistadores, led on by rumors of El Dorado and the Fountain of Youth, laid claim to a realm from California to Chile. But a work of art's responsibility is to give its chosen materials persuasive life, and "Sea of Lentils," drawing its surreal atmosphere from the facts, does concoct a sickening vision of the cruelty, greed, oppression, and destruction unleashed upon the New World by its Spanish conquerors. With the semimillennial anniversary of Columbus's landfall almost upon us, this novel makes us sorry that America was discovered. —JOHN UPDIKE

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

DAMAGE, by Josephine Hart (Knopf; $18). An affected little novel that purports to be the account of a tragic obsessive love affair between a middle-aged Member of Parliament and a younger woman who happens to be his son's fiancée. This would be an ugly story if it were believable, but the narration is so breathlessly sententious that it's hard to take seriously the principal characters (who by definition are "damaged," or deficient in human feeling), the setting (an England that seems to consist entirely of designer flats and country houses), or the dialogue and the notes people send. "Semen and tears are the symbols of the night" is typical of what passes for communication between the doomed couple.

GENERAL

MY FRANCE: POLITICS, CULTURE, MYTH, by Eugen Weber (Harvard; $24.95). This book of essays could be viewed as a showcase of the work of a master historian who specializes in France, and whose approach to the over-all story of a people is by way of its cultural attitudes, its peculiarity or singularity, its collective mind-set. One chapter, for example, considers the change in the Frenchman's regard for his Gallic ancestry: until the Revolution, Gauls, who were Celts, and were held to be crude and boorish, were something to be ashamed of; afterward, French chauvinists and racists denigrated the Latin—Mediterranean—strain in the populace, and extolled the purity of the Gallic. Another chapter discusses the bemusing fact, along with its implications, that well into the nineteenth century a large minority of the people within the borders of France neither spoke nor understood the French language. Other essays take up the nature of the rightist mentality in France, anti-Semitism, the realities of peasant life as reflected in folk tales, the birth of nationalism. Mr. Weber's book stimulates thought, questions long-held assumptions, and breathes life into the human story.

CONTINUAL LESSONS: THE JOURNALS OF GLENWAY WESCOTT, 1937-1955, edited by Robert Phelps, with Jerry Rosco (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $27.95). The poet, novelist, and essayist Glenway Wescott started keeping a diary soon after he returned to America following a near-decade of expatriation in France. His writing career, after a dazzling beginning in the nineteen-twenties, had begun to fade before he was thirty. A long period of lotus-eating and time-wasting among the more decorative (and well-heeled) illuminati of Paris and New York was broken by the publication, in the forties, of two distinguished, if rather slight, works—"The Pilgrim Hawk" and "Apartment in Athens." After that came years of creative stasis. Instead, there was work for the American Academy / Institute of Arts and Letters, busyness in and about his garden, socializing with friends—Auden and Isherwood, Marianne Moore, Somerset Maugham, E. M. Forster—and love affairs with younger men, which he anatomizes with extreme candor. In the nineteen-seventies, Wescott decided to allow his journals to be published after his death. He was a serious literary artist, and his thoughts on life and art and nature and love were well worth preserving. Photographs.

GAZA: A YEAR IN THE INTIFADA, by Gloria Emerson (Atlantic Monthly; $19.95). The noted American journalist went to Gaza in 1989 to bring to Americans the Palestinian experience of Israeli occupation and of the *intifada*, the rebellion that began in Gaza in December of 1987. Her report describes a subtropical landscape populated partly by its original inhabitants and partly by thousands of refugees living in camps. She records an all too familiar downward spiral, a test of wills in which Palestinian mutiny leads to Israeli repression, which, in turn, leads to increased insurgency and severer—even atrocious—repression. Her book would be more useful if it had a political or intellectual framework for the uninformed, or a narrative that related the succession of her days and explained how she was able to carry out her reporting in occupied territory, presumably under the eyes of the occupying power. But perhaps she has done just what she set out to do: put together an album of extremely disturbing verbal snapshots.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: DECONSTRUCTION AND THE FALL OF PAUL DE MAN, by David Lehman (Poseidon; $21.95). Mr. Lehman has produced a well-researched and strongly argued work of literary journalism about "the posthumous shock" of the discovery that the critic Paul de Man had written a hundred and seventy articles for a pro-Nazi newspaper in his native Belgium during the Second World War. The first part of the book is devoted to an exceptionally clear account of the importation (mainly from France), development, and practice of deconstructionist criticism in this country, including the essential contributions of de Man. The author strives to give the benefit of the doubt to this dizzying theoretical system, but in the second half of the book he brings a prosecutorial intensity to his treatment of de Man's youthful propaganda work and the implications of his coverup. Although the idea tempts him, Mr. Lehman does not strain toward "viewing the whole of deconstruction as a vast amnesty project for the politics of collaboration." Still, in the face of a few contorted attempts by several of de Man's followers to justify his repellent and haunting wartime behavior, Mr. Lehman speaks of the horror of the Holocaust for its millions of victims: "It was not, for them, a linguistic predicament."

MYSTERY AND CRIME

MURDER SAVES FACE, by Haughton Murphy (Simon & Schuster; $18.95). This is the sixth novel nicely exemplifying the deductive powers of Reuben Frost, a retired highly successful corporate lawyer, and the first to give us a murder on the new, supposedly well-secured midtown premises (known to its occupants as Fort Bliss) of the law offices of Chase & Ward, Frost's old firm. Security problems bring out the imaginative best in both Mr. Murphy—himself a retired corporate lawyer—and Frost. The victim here is a young and beautiful senior associate, found strangled in the office archives on the day she is supposed to close an important merger. Mr. Murphy writes a measured, agreeably old-fashioned prose that properly complements Frost's gentlemanly deportment, calm lucidity of mind, appreciation of unostentatious good living, and strong moral character. Indeed, Mr. Murphy seems to be leading us back to a new sort of avant-garde.

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CORRECTIONS

A Thursday story incorrectly quoted Councilman Stewart Clifton as calling Mayor Bill Boner a "squeeze-bag." Clifton called Boner a "sleaze-bag."—*Nashville (Tenn.) Banner.*

That's more like it.

•

"Only God can make a tree," wrote Emily Dickinson, but now scientists say they are close to imitating the strategy of trees and other green plants—and converting sunlight into energy by photosynthesis.—*Caption in the San Jose (Calif.) Mercury News.*

And Joyce Kilmer into Emily Dickinson.

As featured in the March
National Geographic

STOLEN SEASON
A Journey Through America and Baseball's Minor Leagues
DAVID LAMB

"This book should be read by anyone who has yet to savor the sounds and delights of a minor-league baseball game; the passions, the exuberance, the coltish élan of players not yet jaded by adulation... *Stolen Season* is part love letter, part snapshot, part lamentation, part history and all-American..."
—*The New York Times Book Review*

"I loved every minute of it."
—JOHN FEINSTEIN,
author of *A Season on the Brink*

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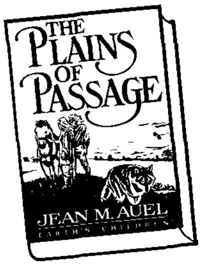

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It's Mother's Day!

Make a donation to the Women's Lunch Place, a shelter for homeless women, in honor of a woman who is special to you. We'll send her a hand designed card telling of your thoughtfulness. Your gift will provide needy women with a festive celebration. Print clearly the name and address of the woman you are honoring, as well as your own. Mail to: Cathy Allen, WLP, 67 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116

In any other language, a kiss

Ah, *les canadiens.* The people of *la belle province. Québec.*

We have these friendly folk to thank for so many things. So you may well be surprised how fluent in *français* you already are.

Though your English poses no problems to speak of.

To wit. That special *ambiance* of their *joie de vivre.* So *nonchalant.* And so *romantique.*

An escorted *calèche* tour along cobblestone streets—the original 16th century names may not trip to the tongue but will linger in the memory.

The *rue de Trésor* ("street of treasures"—see it's not so hard) with souvenirs most easily described as *magnifique.* To make only passing mention of *bistros* and *chic boutiques en route.* Or the sculpted church *façades* that ring of Old World grace.

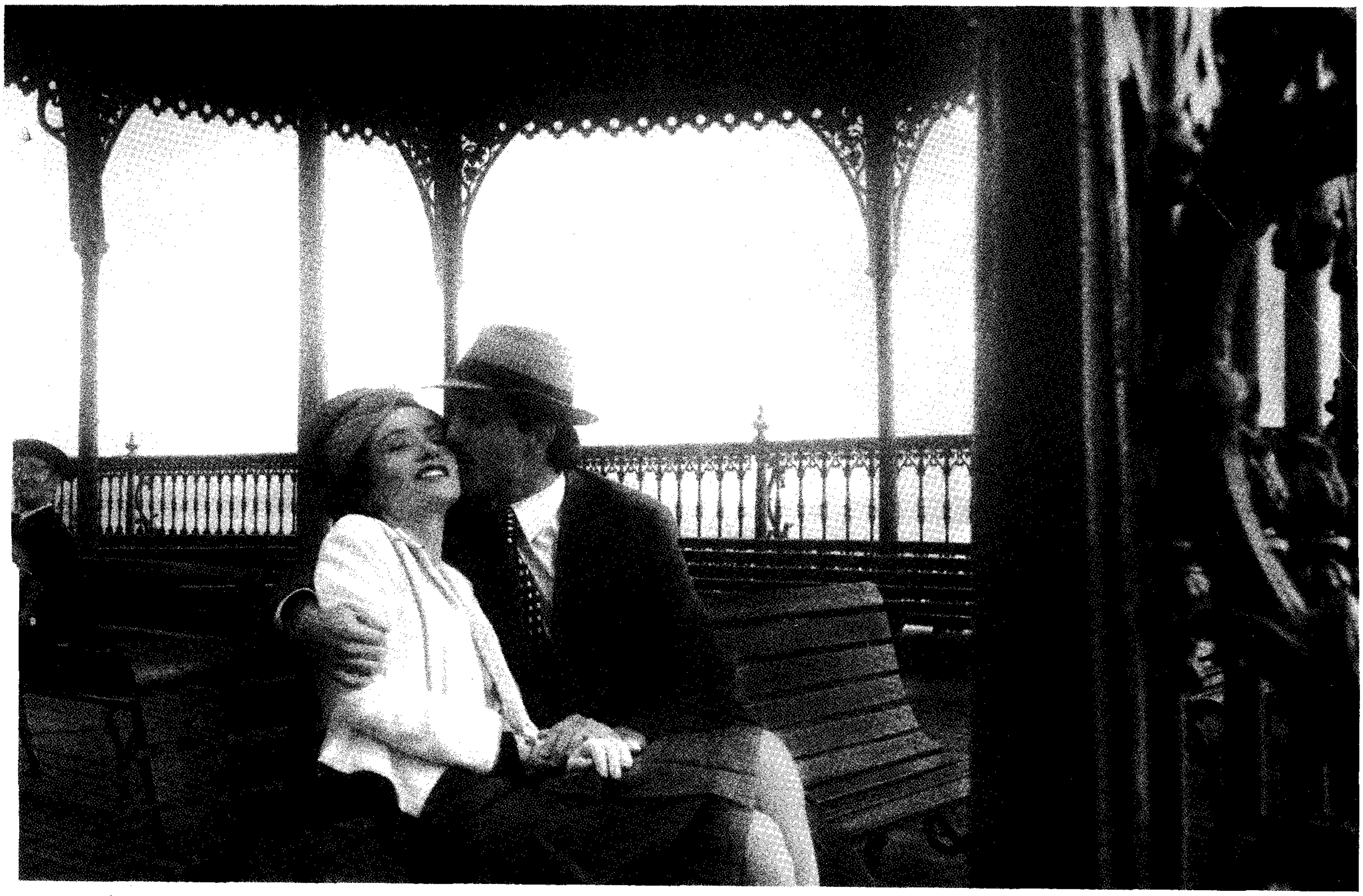
It's a penchant for the passionate as old as the ancient *château,* complete with turrets, parapets and crenels, overlooking the city and citadel and out onto the picturesque St. Lawrence River.

And dare we put words in your mouth, but *voilà!, gourmet cuisine.* Perhaps a peppery *pâté* as an *hors d'oeuvre.* The *pièce de résistance*—a saucy *soufflé* accompanied by a fine *Bordeaux.* Topped by an airy *éclair* and *café au lait?* Understandably leaves a lot to the taste but li to the translation.

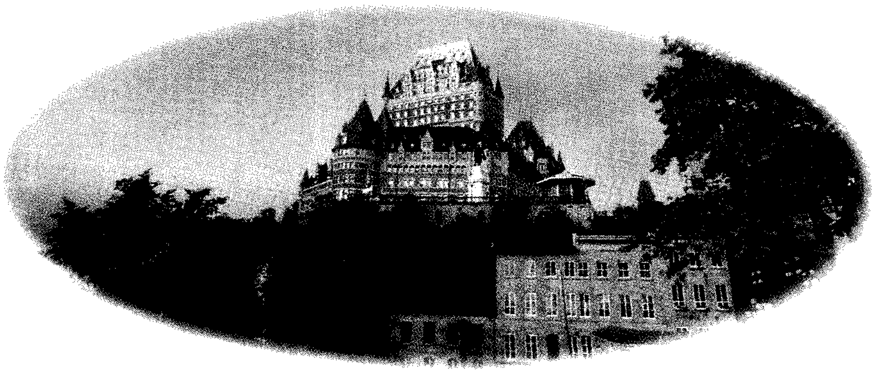
Bon appétit!

Afterwards, a moonlit stroll, ha in hand, down t boardwalk. Don't surprised if a perfect stranger bids you *"Bonsoir."* It's simpl way of welcome, and wishin you a pleasant evening.

is just a kiss.



And you? Perhaps lovers?
ur *fiancée*? A second honey-
on? Though it's certainly not
r place to pry.
For this is the place for
mance. For secret seclusion
the rest of the world.
Perhaps that's why there's no
ect English translation for
dez-vous.
And the only difficulty you'll
counter is saying *adieu.*

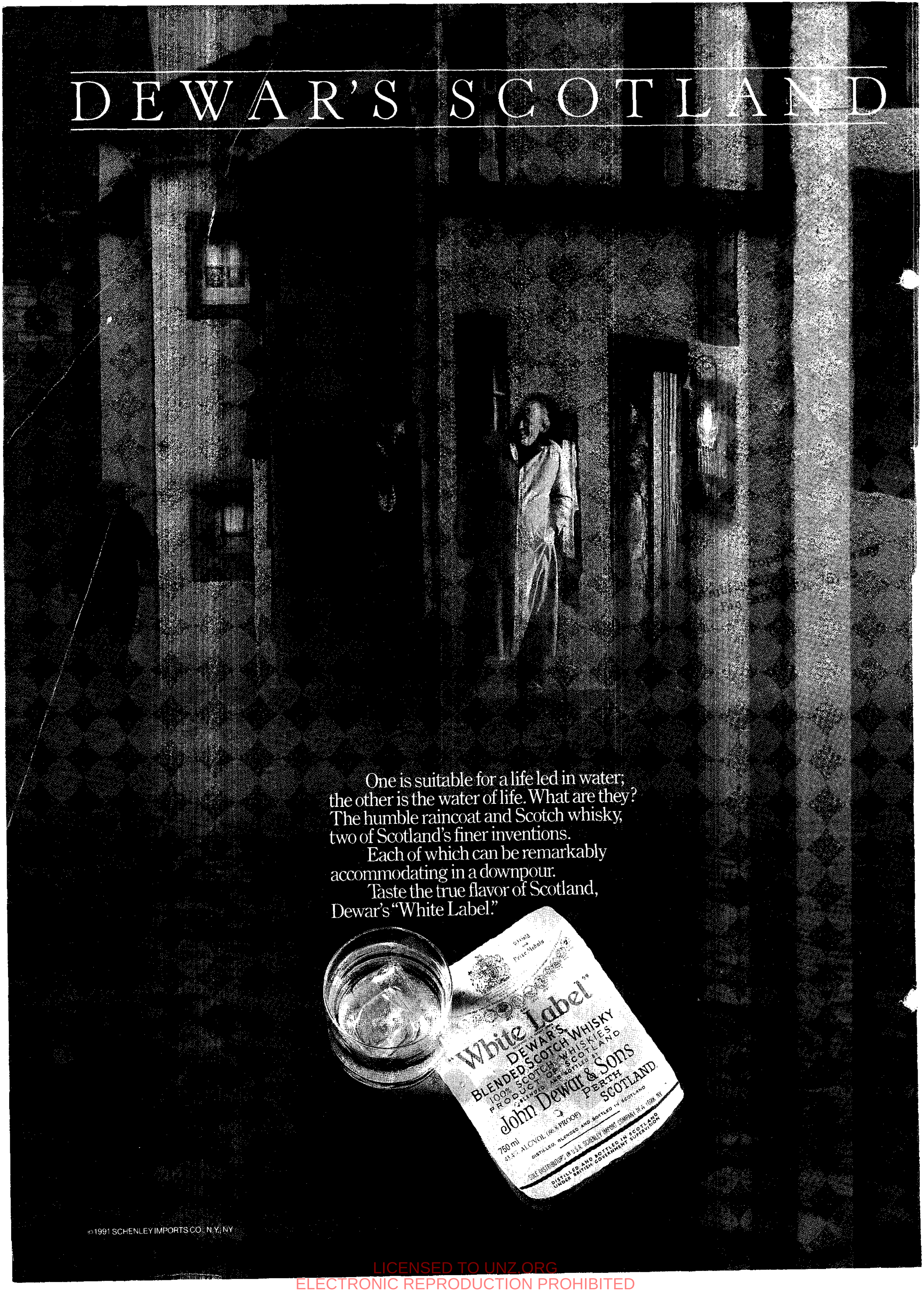


Canada

The World Next Door

For your copy of the Traveller's Guide to Canada, see the ad elsewhere in this issue.

DEWAR'S SCOTLAND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